

Punch

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The English Scene

Painted by John Leigh Pemberton

CHRISTMAS DAY PARADE OF YEOMEN WARDERS, TOWER OF LONDON



NOT SO LONG AGO someone dredged up from the depths of the sea a very odd fish indeed. This (you may remember) turned out to be a coelacanth—a creature which, it was confidently asserted by those who knew about such things, had been 'extinct' for several millions of years. We rather liked that—but only (we hasten to add) because we have an enduring interest in survivals from the past. Though our native scene holds, in this respect, nothing of comparable lineage, it is nevertheless far from bare. We instance Stonehenge . . . the Ceremony of Coronation . . . the Tower of London . . . the Yeomen of the Guard (though *they* are practically contemporary, having been in existence only for 500 years).

Call these 'archaic survivals' if you will, but how much poorer would be the English scene without them! Indeed, Christmas itself would be less happy, shorn of its time-honoured trappings. Let us by all means keep the holly and the mistletoe, the pudding and the waits, the Christmas tree and the Christmas presents. The presents . . . and there's the rub! What to give to whom is everybody's current problem. But is it really so difficult? You have only to walk into any Midland Bank branch and murmur 'Gift Cheques' and your problem is solved—at the trifling cost of 1/- per cheque, plus the amount you want to give. So, since this service is available to everyone, we can not only *wish* you a Happy Christmas; we can do something towards helping you to have one!

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takes note of current affairs

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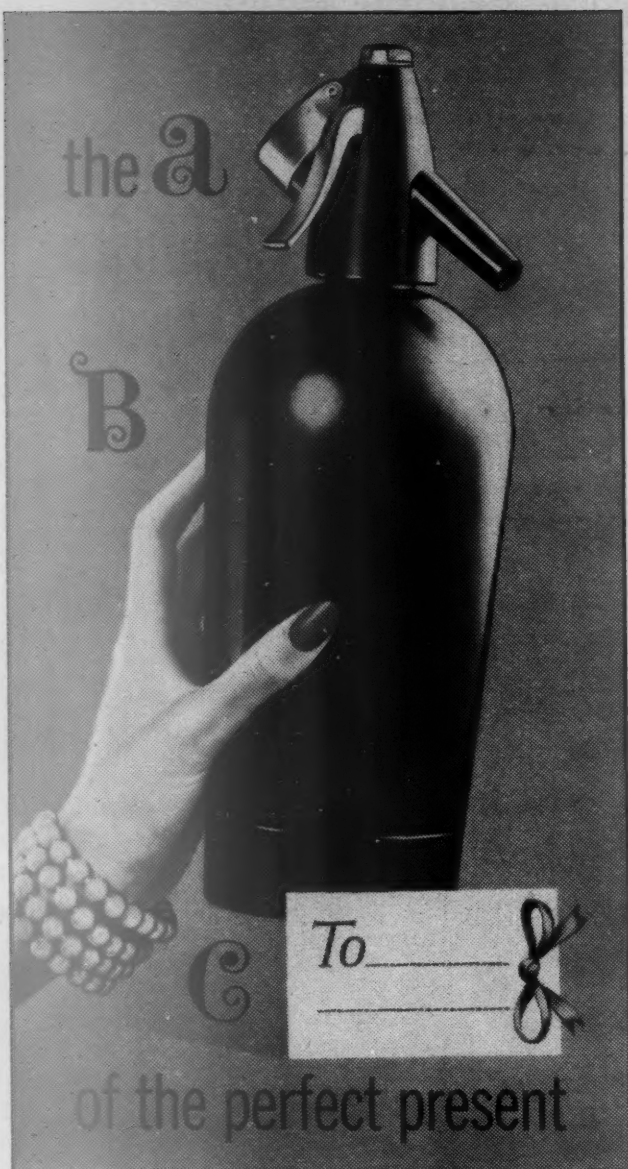
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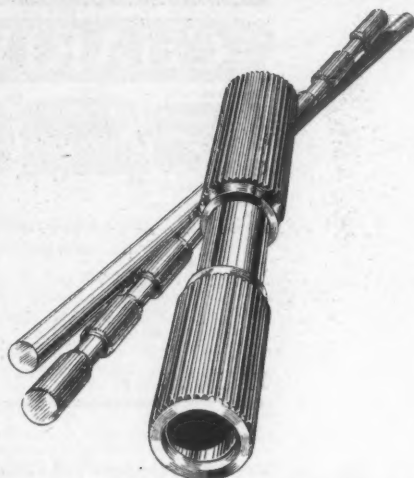
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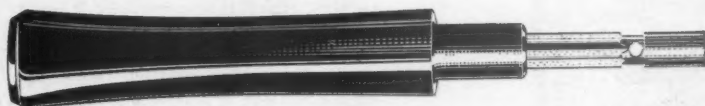
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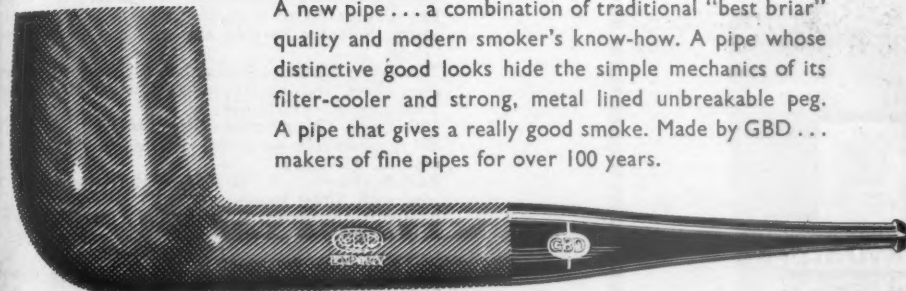
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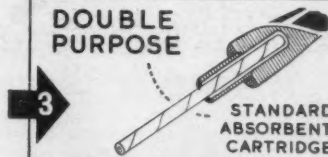
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Punch, December 6 1961



All the listings are based on the latest information available at the time of going to press.

THEATRE

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

- The Affair** (Strand: TEM 2660)—did the Don fake the thesis? Ronald Millar out of C. P. Snow. (27/9/61)
- The Amorous Prawn** (Piccadilly: GER 4506)—old-model hearty comedy, funny in places. (16/12/59)
- Becket** (Aldwych: TEM 6404)—a winner by Anouilh, well acted. Dec. 6. (26/6/61)
- Beyond the Fringe** (Fortune: TEM 2238)—four ex-undergraduates very funny in original revue. (17/5/61)
- Big Soft Nellie** (Theatre Royal, Stratford: MAR 5973)—reviewed this week.
- Billy Liar** (Cambridge: TEM 6056)—newcomer Tom Courtenay in weak play about north-country Walter Mitty. (21/9/60)
- Bonne Soupe** (Comedy: WHI 2578)—cynical comedy from Paris, not for the nursery. (1/11/61)
- Bye Bye Birdie** (Her Majesty's: WHI 6606)—satirical American musical, Chita Rivera wonderful. (21/6/61)
- Critic's Choice** (Vaudeville: TEM 4871)—new play with Ian Carmichael.
- Do Re Mi** (Prince of Wales: WHI 8681)—average American musical. (18/10/61)
- Fings Ain't Wot They Used T'be** (Garrick: TEM 4601)—low-life British musical, funny but not for Aunt Edna. (17/2/60)
- Goodnight, Mrs. Puffin** (Duchess: TEM 8243)—few comic clichés remain unturned. (26/6/61)
- Guilty Party** (St. Martin's: TEM 1443)—very exciting, big business whodunit. (23/8/61)
- Heartbreak House** (Wyndham's: TEM 3028)—excellent revival of one of Shaw's most stimulating plays. (8/11/61)
- Irma la Douce** (Lyric: GER 3686)—low-life French musical, good for the sophisticated. (23/7/58)
- The Irregular Verb to Love** (Criterion: WHI 3216)—another witty domestic tangle by Hugh and Margaret Williams. (19/4/61)
- The Keep** (Royal Court: SLO 1745)—Welsh domestic comedy, unusual, touching and very funny. (29/11/61)
- Let Yourself Go!** (Palladium: GER 7373)—revue. Harry Secombe lovable and Eddie Calvert loud. (31/5/61)
- The Long Sunset** (Mermaid: CIT 7656)—gripping play about end of Roman occupation of Britain. Until Dec. 9. (15/11/61)
- The Lord Chamberlain Regrets** (Saville: TEM 4011)—disappointing revue, determinedly but vainly topical. (30/8/61)
- Luther** (Phoenix: TEM 8611)—John Osborne's new play, with Albert Finney. (9/8/61)
- Mourning Becomes Electra** (Old Vic: WAT 7616)—some virtuoso acting in worth-while revival of a moving play. Dec. 6, 8-13. (29/11/61)
- The Mousetrap** (Ambassadors: TEM 1171)—triumphantly past its 10-year test. (16/12/52)
- The Music Man** (Adelphi: TEM 7611)—slick dancing in dull treacly American musical. (22/3/61)
- My Fair Lady** (Drury Lane: TEM 8108)—still a good musical. (7/5/58)

Punch, December 6 1961

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Oliver! (New: TEM 3878)—exciting British musical from *Oliver Twist*. (6/7/60)

One For The Pot (Whitehall: WHI 6692)—the latest Whitehall farce. (16/8/61)

One Over the Eight (Duke of York's: TEM 5122)—Kenneth Williams in patchy revue. (12/4/61)

Out of my Mind (Lyric, Hammersmith: RIV 8280)—reviewed this week.

The Rehearsal (Globe: GER 1592)—amusing and dramatic Anouilh, very well acted. Transfers to Apollo Dec. 11. (12/4/61)

Ross (Haymarket: WHI 9832)—Rattigan's fine study of T. E. Lawrence. (18/5/60)

Senegal Dance Ensemble (Princes: TEM 6596)—three-week season.

The Sound of Music (Palace: GER 6834)—tunes the best thing in a very sentimental American musical. (31/5/61)

Stop the World, I Want to Get Off (Queen's: REG 1166)—Newley's patchily good musical satire. (26/7/61)

The Taming of the Shrew (Aldwych: TEM 6404)—Vanessa Redgrave and Derek Godfrey make the evening worth while. Dec. 7-9. (20/9/61)

Twelfth Night (Old Vic: WAT 7616)—revival with new casting. Dec. 7. (26/4/61)

A Whistle in the Dark (Apollo: GER 2663)—Irish violence, well done. Until Dec. 9. (20/9/61)

Young in Heart (Victoria Palace: VIC 1317)—the Crazy Gang still certifiable. (4/1/61)

REP SELECTION

Derby, Playhouse—**Epitaph for George Dillon**, until Dec. 16.

Dundee—**Pools Paradise**, until Dec. 6.

Leatherhead—**Cromwell at Drogheda** with Donald Wolfitt, until Dec. 16.

Manchester, Library Theatre—**Pinocchio**, nine weeks' season.

Perth—**The Captives**, Dec. 4, 6, 8, 12, 14 and 16.

CINEMA

(Dates in brackets refer to Punch reviews)

Les Adolescents (Cinephone: MAY 4721 and Jacey: TEM 3648)—Franco-Italian, directed by Lattuada; sexual awakening of young girl. Uneven, with some entertaining detail.

Bachelor in Paradise (Ritz: GER 1234)—Bright comedy with Bob Hope as a sociologist studying American life. (15/11/61)

Ben-Hur (Royalty: HOL 8004)—The old faithful spectacular: chariot-race splendid, and otherwise bearable even by those who usually avoid "epics." (30/12/59)

The Connection (Academy: GER 2981)—Uniquely impressive, from the play about the roomful of drug-addicts and the man filming them. (22/11/61)

The Day the Earth Caught Fire (Odeon, Marble Arch: PAD 8011)—Reviewed this week.

The Devil at Four O'Clock (Odeon, Leicester Square: WHI 6111)—Steamy highly-coloured hokum, with Spencer Tracy as a whisky priest, Sinatra as a noble criminal, and a volcano.

Exodus (Astoria: GER 5385)—Long (3 hrs. 40 mins.) spectacular account of what preceded and followed the birth of Israel in 1947. Action stuff good, character conventional. (17/5/61)

Il Generale della Rovere (International Film Theatre: BAY 2345)—Rossellini directs de Sica in war story of rogue who becomes hero by impersonation. (22/11/61)

Hiroshima Mon Amour (Gala-Royal: AMB 2345)—Revival of the subtle, moving, allusive, atmospheric love story directed by Alain Resnais. (20/1/60)

The Hustler (Rialto: GER 3488)—Admirably done, absorbing story of a billiards swindler. (8/11/61)

The Innocents (Carlton: WHI 3711)—Reviewed this week.

Kapo (Continental: MUS 4193)—Woman's inhumanity to woman in Nazi prison camps. Hate propaganda.

King of Kings (Coliseum: TEM 3161)—The life of Christ, well but too cautiously presented. Some good spectacular scenes, not enough character. (29/11/61)

The Pavements of Paris (Cameo-Royal: WHI 6915)—French (*Le Pavé de Paris*): 16-year-old girl's vicissitudes. Might have been quite cynically aimed at the people who will queue for any "X" film, but has good moments.

CONTINUED ON PAGE XV



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE XIII

La Règle du Jeu (Academy: GER 2981, late night show)—Jean Renoir's classic, in full for the first time since 1939. (11/10/61)

Saturday Night and Sunday Morning (Curzon: GRO 3737)—A young Northerner (Albert Finney) at home and in and out of one or two other beds. Admirably done, very enjoyable. (9/11/60)

Shadow of Adultery (Berkeley: MUS 8150)—Misleading title for the French *La Proie pour l'Ombre*. Career-woman (Annie Girardot) plays independence, ditches lover (Christian Marquand) as well as husband (Daniel Gelin) to get it. Good detail, contrived framework.

South Pacific (Dominion: MUS 2176)—Lush colour (Todd-AO) Rodgers and Hammerstein musical: US soldiers, sailors, girls on a Pacific island in 1943. (7/5/58)

Spartacus (Metropole: VIC 4673)—Spectacular "epic" with Kirk Douglas as a gladiator; blood, violence and colour in the arena. Ends Dec. 6.

The Sundowners (Studio one: GER 3300)—Robert Mitchum as a footloose Australian sheep-herder, Deborah Kerr as his wife who wants to settle down. Splendid colour visuals. Till Dec. 14. (25/1/61)

A Taste of Honey (Gala-Royal: AMB 2345)—Excellent film version of the play: drabness made exhilarating by perceptive writing, fresh playing, observant direction. (27/9/61)

This is Cinerama (London Casino: GER 6877)—the first Cinerama show, back for a time.

Too Late Blues (Plaza: WHI 8944)—Reviewed this week.

The Virgin Spring (Compton: GER 1522)—13th-century story: innocence defiled and avenged. Ingmar Bergman at his most symbolic.

SHOPS

On Dec. 12 **Harrods** open their Christian Dior Boutique. Catering for accessories, this will feature jewellery, bags, scarves, perfume, gloves and men's ties. **Liberty's** have exclusive hand-painted wool and silk ties, blouses, separates. Oriental Christmas stock includes kimonos, hand-painted scrolls and tiles, bamboo and ivory carving. At **Whiteleys** are bamboo beer mugs, teak tobacco jars, and a new Candle Bar. **Fortnum & Mason's** Christmas candle and soap department is now open.

Bourne & Hollingsworth have replanned their main restaurant, next to the new self-service one. Informal fashion parades take place at tea-time. Their Christmas merchandise includes Italian and Czechoslovakian glassware, Florentine leather goods. **Austin Reed's** have blackjack leather water jugs, **Aquascutum** coach-hide tankards and ice-buckets, **Simpson's** pigskin covered pocket dictionaries and wallets.

The next **Harry Hall**, Regent Street, Dry-Ski School course will start Dec. 12. Enrolment necessary.

MUSIC AND BALLET

Royal Albert Hall—Dec. 9, 7.30 pm, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (*Beethoven*). Dec. 10, 7.30 pm, London Philharmonic Orchestra (*Beethoven*). Dec. 12, 7.30 pm, London Senior Orchestra, Christmas concert.

Royal Festival Hall—Dec. 6, 8 pm, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (*Brahms*). Dec. 7, 8 pm, London Philharmonic Orchestra, soloist Wolfgang Schneiderhan (violin). Dec. 8, 8 pm, English Chamber Orchestra. Dec. 9, 8 pm, London Symphony Orchestra. Dec. 10, 2.30 pm, Goldsmiths' Choral Union; 7.30 pm, Philharmonia Orchestra, soloist Malcolm Frager (piano). Dec. 11, 8 pm, Isaac Stern (violin) Eugene Istomin (piano) Leonard Rose (cello). Dec. 12, 8 pm, London Bach Players.

Wigmore Hall—Dec. 6, 7.30 pm, Annette de la Bije (soprano) Jan de Man (piano). Dec. 7, 7.30 pm, Hazel Schmid (soprano) Gerald Moore (piano). Dec. 8, 7.30 pm, John Tunnell (violin). Dec. 9, 3 pm, Ruth Reese (contralto) Ivor Newton (piano); 7.30 pm, Gordon Honey (baritone) Rose Inlander and

CONTINUED ON PAGE XVIII

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PUNCH

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Z



Charivaria

WHEN an *Express* man was mobbed in Nairobi in mistake for Mr. Maudling, the police told him, "That's what comes of looking like a gentleman, wearing a tie." I am glad to know that British Cabinet Ministers still keep up the old tradition of behaving like officers and gentlemen, dressing for dinner in jungles, carrying umbrellas to international conferences, wearing collars. As long as they can look uncomfortable they can continue to baffle, and it is only by being baffling that England can maintain its position.

Drones in the Hive

PRIVATE armies multiply. One thousand anti-noise officers are now being enrolled by the Noise Abatement Society to go about with ears to the ground like talent scouts, auditioning the din and passing judgment on the performance. I wish their cause well, but what with security forces, traffic



wardens, sociology teams asking why you gave up Beethoven for bingo, CND sitting on the pavement outside and Jehovah's Witnesses standing on the threshold inside, plus a few cross-section pollsters, municipal toolhouse measurers and Swedenborgian revivalists, one feels almost ashamed of being just a private person, which was what the Greek word idiot originally meant.

Roses by Other Names

THE BBC's explanation of their new name for Childrens' Hour—"Junior Time"—is that children no

longer like being called children. Personally I get rather bored with this endless business of keeping up with the names people like to be called. Lunatic asylums, which first became mental hospitals and are now just hospitals, are still lunatic asylums once you get inside the gates. As for the—the Hamitic Races, fashions change so



fast it's impossible to keep up with them. It's not many years since "nigger" was a term of affection (cf. "Ten Little Nigger Boys"). I thought I was safe with "coloured" this year until I saw a complaint the other day from a South African who objected to being called coloured when she was really black. As far as I'm concerned, children will remain children until someone can bring me a better substitute than juniors, kids or teenagers.

Passive Resistance

A TV hater has been running over roof-tops, uprooting aerials. A pleasant change, this, from the more usually encountered professed hater, who appears to concentrate his energies on sitting deep in the armchair, watching.

Roundabouts and Swings

ALTHOUGH he knew it would do him harm with the Roman Catholics, an American politician is said to have gone ahead with his divorce

because he reckoned it would bring him support from "the divorce vote." It is about time that the psephologists had some new concept to play with and I look forward at the next election to hearing Mr. Robert Mackenzie and Mr. David Butler analysing the effect that splitting the divorce vote could have on the chances of a Liberal revival.

Letting the Light In

DESPITE their troubles British Railways are courageously pursuing their policy of fuller information for the public. Though this chiefly takes the form of loudspeaker apologies for late train arrivals it was carried further at London Bridge last week with a number of blackboards neatly chalked "Danger, Men Working Overhead. Cleaning Roof Glass." I would have thought that members of the public struck from above by buckets or other articles wouldn't care what operation they were a part of. But perhaps, after all, it was only a sly comeback at complaints about dirty stations.

The Common Touch

IT is difficult to picture an exact replica here of the American scene in which Frank Sinatra was rebuked for undue familiarity with Mr. Kennedy



"Stop nagging. There are umpteen amendments to the Bill, then there's the Christmas recess, then it goes to the Lords."

—"Hi! Pres." was thought to be going too far. For one thing our singers and statesmen mix less. Adam Faith is unlikely to have the opportunity, apart from the inclination, to offer a "Howdie, Hal" to the Premier. How our own leaders would take it is another matter. Churchill wouldn't have minded—he once made a glowing public reference to Harry Lauder—but of the others this century only Lloyd George, I think, could have shared back-slapping terms as with a fellow-performer. Asquith would have delivered a snub in Latin and Baldwin would have blown pipe-smoke in the hail-fellow's face.

No Exemption for Gaols

THE gift shop in an American prison has been badly hit by the local Sunday closing laws. Over here one always thinks of prisons as being somehow cut off from the law, oases of the free and easy; but perhaps all the time the Lord's Day Observance Society has been getting its investigators convicted so that they can report whether make-up is used in Sabbath concerts. I wish local councils would prosecute the Prison Commissioners under the Overcrowding Acts for letting prisoners sleep three in a cell.

Steak Pies of Old England

WHEN Nottingham's official food sampler—that's how he is described in the piece I read, though I'm sure he must have some more grandiose title really, such as Municipal Alimentarian—was sampling some steak pies he gave it as his opinion to the magistrates that "you must be able to find pieces of visible steak, and they must have at least twenty per cent meat in them." In sausages, I think I'm right in saying, there are various substances, milk-powder for example, which are allowed by law to rate as meat; but I seek advice on what constitutes the odd eighty per cent of this visible steak.

Colour Problem

A PLEASANT redistribution of the usual items was evident in a recent story about a woman who complained that "fallout" from a neighbouring chemical works had bleached the blue blankets hanging on her line to a

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"snowy white." Generally it's the blue speckles in the chemicals that bleach white blankets to a snowy white. When we hear of something that turns snowy white blankets bluer than blue we shall know that the cycle is complete.

East is West

AMERICAN barbers are petitioning Congress to ban the close cropped GI haircut, as this is "guaranteed to de-personalise a man." But this hardly seems the best of times to introduce the personality cult to the US Army.

Dividing Line

ONE of the rummiest things about us as a nation is the way we decide that certain things are part of our cultural heritage and schedule them under an Act of Parliament but then, feeling we have done our duty, let everything else go hang. Manchester City Council want to build a water-works in the Lake District to draw supplies from Ullswater. "Efforts," it is said, "will be made to preserve scenery and amenities where the work comes within the Lake District National Park." Splendid (provided the efforts come to something; if the effect is huge and hideous it'll be no use saying "Well, we did try.") Of course, it doesn't matter what sort of a shambles they make outside the National Park. The area isn't *officially* beautiful.

A Sound Wine

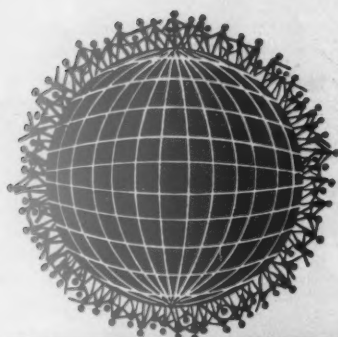
YOU can now buy a disc of two oenophiles discussing wine-buying: no doubt one side covers red and the other white. Useful for misers to play to their guests while dining.

—MR. PUNCH

PUNCH, December 6 1961



MAN OF PROMISE



THE CROWDED WORLD

Population problems
in the Far East



THE QUEER BIRDS

By DESMOND DONNELLY

"NINETY to a hundred million new jobs will have to be created in India by 1976," says S. N. Agarwala of the Institute of Economic Growth at Delhi University. "I am the man who has to find enough capital to put tools into the hands of twelve to fifteen million new people each year," says Bo I-po of the Government of the People's Republic of China.

In fifteen years the combined populations of India and China will be in the region of 1,300,000,000 people. This is 100,000,000 more than the entire human race at the time when Queen Victoria was first ruling over that empire upon which the sun was not supposed to set; and Dr. Arnold was caning boys at Rugby, before sending them forth to dispense justice at the ends of the earth.

As to my old friend, Superjack, who has never heard of the Amalgamated Union of Demographers—there are enough questions to disturb even his complacency as he "feels all right" and "has it good."

What does it all mean in terms of world politics and military power? How do the Chinese and the Indians see it? And, as they struggle to raise their living standards, how do they regard Superjack (a chilling thought for contemplation upon his next Saturday night and Sunday morning).

Yes, Superjack—I remember an overnight flight from Delhi to Karachi. I arrived in Karachi while it was still dark. The car that had come to meet me took me into the city as the dawn was breaking.

We sped through the silent streets, the car's headlights picking out bundles of rags lying on either side in the gutter. It grew lighter. The bundles moved.

These homeless, hopeless, gutter-dwellers are to be found in most great cities on the Indian sub-continent. What are they thinking of the comfortable, well-fed Superjacks of Europe? And what are they going to do about their feelings?

In China, where people have been largely conscripted off the streets, I recall a train journey of a thousand miles from Peking to Canton. I looked from the train windows for nearly all the daylight hours of four days at peasants scratching at the soil with implements whose design was old when Solomon was King. I thought of Superjack's farming country cousin, Supergiles—with his tractors, balers, combines, featherbeds and fertilisers.

The central challenge—to both Mao Tse-tung and Nehru and to their successors—is one of resources. Capital, even to the most boneheaded, raucous Communist zealot, has become a vital necessity for survival, not the term of abuse.

Can it come from within China and India? Can it come from other countries? Can it come in time? Or is there to be such an explosion that Khrushchev's 50-megaton bomb will appear in retrospect as a mild and avuncular joke?

Though the basic problem is the same, there is a wide divergence of attitudes between the men who rule in Peking's rose-red city and those who sit amidst the Lutyens splendour of New Delhi.

In short, dictatorship and democracy have two views about people as individuals—and in aggregate numbers.

The Peking Marxist regards rapidly increasing population as the great national asset. To him there is no such thing as the Malthusian doctrine. Prod him with a question (an experience with which he is no longer familiar) and he will say "There is no such thing as overpopulation—only underproduction and underconsumption." Goad him a little more and he will add "Malthusianism is bourgeois-capitalist nonsense!"

There was a time when even Peking had doubts. In the late 1950s, a half-hearted drive was undertaken to popularise birth control in China. Lurid and uninhibited posters appeared at exhibitions in some cities, alongside pictures of benign Chairman Mao—perhaps to give his all-pervading Big Brother blessing. The Communist press gave prominence to an experiment in North China that live

DESMOND DONNELLY is an Englishman with an Irish name, born in India, representing the Premier County of Wales. Has travelled more behind the Iron Curtain than almost any other British citizen, with the exception of the Dean of Canterbury, whom he once found referred to as the "Lama Johnson" when Donnelly was visiting a Buddhist monastery in Outer Mongolia. MP for 11 years, known for independent views. Age 41. Author of "The March Wind" and now working on a history of the Cold War. Recreations: poetry and walking.

tadpoles, swallowed, were the cheapest and easiest type of birth control pills. Twenty young men from the party stood by to prove the efficacy of this new development of Marxist-Leninist doctrine.

Then there was silence. Posters grew tatty and disappeared. The tadpoles were forgotten. No more was heard of the young men. Only in a people's democracy can it happen that way.

Instead a new approach to the population problem appeared suddenly. It included new means for mobilising, controlling and training the great tread-march of what Robert Guilan has called "China's blue ants." It was the Chinese Commune.

Chairman Mao, in the twentieth century, had stumbled upon Fourier's *phalange* proposals of the early nineteenth century. The Peking *People's Daily* put it succinctly, "From private property we will change to public property. All land still held by individuals, private houses, animals, trees [Yes, Superjack, on your way back from Brighton or Blackpool, a single tree is considered an important possession in China] must become the property of the commune. Individuals will temporarily continue to own small numbers of animals and fowls, which will gradually be absorbed. Thus the last vestiges of personal property will die out."

It was all done "voluntarily." A picture was created at once of a tolerant, easy-going Communist Government in Peking being bombarded by several hundred million Chinese St. Therasas demanding to give up all their worldly possessions.

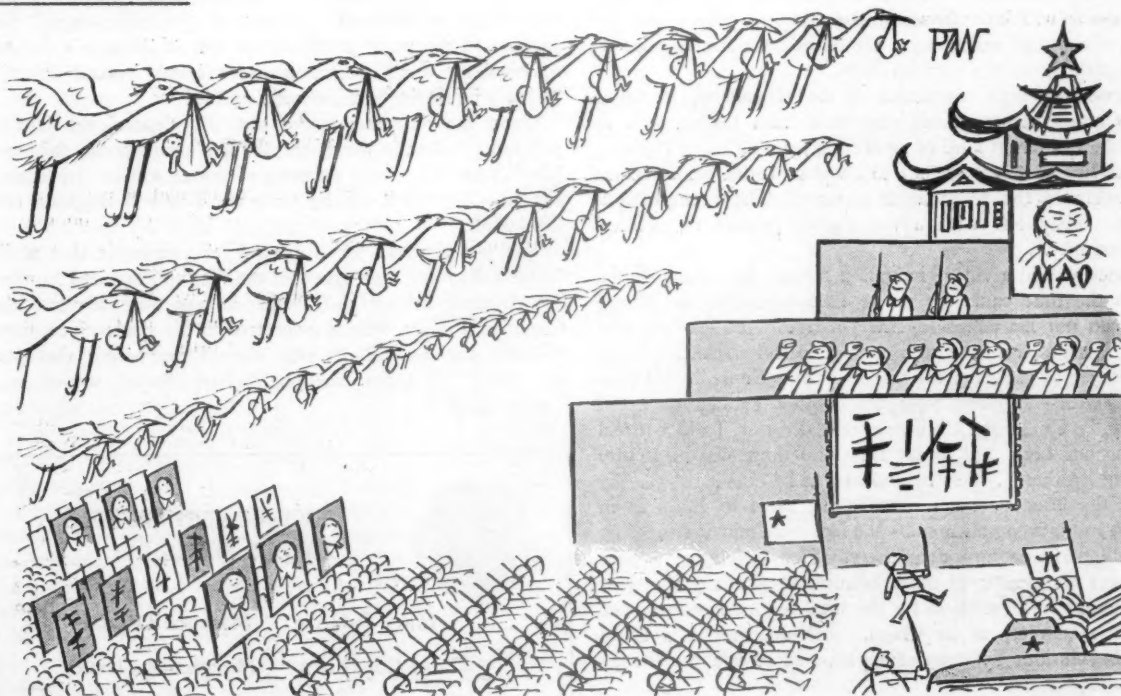
Benign Chairman Mao, being easy-going and understanding, laughed, tapped his pipe and agreed.

So the great "voluntary" tide has rolled on. Families now send their children "voluntarily" to "free" nurseries and kindergartens. They eat in "free" mess halls, and they join the militia "freely" with the aim that one in three of China's population, men, women and children, will be trained in the use of small arms to form a "Territorial Army," 250,000,000 strong by 1970—and it will not have Field-Marshal Montgomery to command it!

All labour in the Communes has been pooled. It has been made mobile and interchangeable. At times it is used for factory building, sometimes for steel smelting, or for dam digging or road building—all according to "the needs of the people."

Husbands and wives are frequently segregated into dormitories. Once in two weeks these couples are lined up for their brief reunion, to be parted again after a few hours. The children are separated from their families. I, personally, visited a crèche for the privileged children of party cadres of the National Front. I record that the children were fit and well. "How often do they see their parents?" I asked the jolly female Director (we would call her the matron). "Once a week," she answered, adding proudly, "they soon love the staff here more than their parents." "Do you think that a good thing?" I asked again. "Oh yes," replied the Director smiling, "because it encourages the group spirit." "Do you think the group spirit a good thing?" I asked yet again. Her jolly smile vanished. Her face looked puzzled and bewildered.

The Crowded World





Nobody had asked such a question of her before. Benign Chairman Mao, whose picture was on the wall behind her, had not prepared her for it.

In China a whole nation, composing between a fifth and a quarter of the human race, is now being mobilised. Li Fu-ch'un, Chairman of the State Planning Commission, organises it with his "Emulation Drive," in which all the workers strive to attain the standards of the best workers, at the same time helping those who are less efficient than themselves. Or to quote Li, "It is to learn from, compete with and catch up with the advanced groups and to help those who are backward." Thus, as Li puts it, "The high mountains will bow down to the Chinese people and the great rivers shall make way. We belittle the strategy but we must plan the tactics very carefully."

Across the high mountains of the Himalayas, in which real Chinese mountaineers also have been taking such an interest, a different kind of revolution is going on in India.

The British never set out to conquer India. They came as traders in the seventeenth century. They remained as rulers. They left with a remarkable gesture of political magnanimity.

I once visited a village irrigation scheme in Central India. When the time came for me to take my leave, the village headman put his palms together in traditional greeting and said "I hope you have seen enough to feel satisfied that we are putting to good use the freedom you gave us." He then added, with simplicity, "An act without parallel in world history." Unlike the Chinese crèche director, I did not feel that he had been told to say this; and there was no picture of "Big Brother" Nehru behind him as he said it.

Yet the basic problem remains the same in India as in China; and it is complicated by the fact that India is struggling towards parliamentary democracy. Her poverty and land problems are similar to those existing in China. She does not attempt to meet them by the total regimentation of her human resources, as in China. Instead she is working towards solutions by long-term plans, all of which envisage foreign capital.

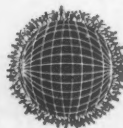
The minimum requirement for India under these plans is £2,000,000,000 over the next five years. The optimum figure is £4,000,000,000. Even the larger figure, according to Miss Barbara Ward in *India and the West*, represents only two-fifths of 1 per cent of the West's total national incomes during the same period, a high mountain that could be made to bow down if the tactics are planned carefully.

Birth control, education, technical training and industrial development are promoted and discussed freely in Nehru's India, in a way which would not be possible in Mao's China.

The immediate issue is: Which will win—the Indian Tortoise or the Chinese Hare, as Mr. John Strachey asks in *The Great Awakening*? Which of the two systems will succeed to the point at which the rest of Afro-Asia decides to emulate Mao's Communism or turns instead towards Nehru's increasingly democratic society?

Upon the outcome of the test will depend the fate of political freedom in the world, for if Nehru's policy fails and Mao's succeeds, world balances of power will be irrevocably altered. Superjack will be no more. Nor will Brighton and Blackpool.

The last thought for Superjack to ponder is that while Lenin's old route map says that the road to Paris and London lies through Peking and Delhi, it was Nostradamus, the French astrologer, who also foretold in the sixteenth century, "There will be yellow men over Paris before the year AD 2,000." "Grim thought," Earl Attlee would say, "queer birds."



FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS SERIES BY:

Mary Adams	Maurice O'Leary
Claud Cockburn	Marghanita Laski

Round Ravioli's

ALAN HACKNEY gets the caff customers' slant on security

"ALL these excessive number of motor cars," complained the Security Van man resentfully. "It's the newspapers doing it. They want to stop 'aving all these competitions with new motor cars as prizes. Blessed roads crowded out."

"I bet you never won that monstrosity of yours from a paper," said Jack. "That van. Well, more of a battering ram. Good job they don't let you park it outside. Soon as anyone touched it we'd 'ave the 'ooter blarin' away and a clouda tear-gas."

"I spose that 'appens when you run up someone's back bumper anyway," said a man with a consignment of basketed pigeons. "Or I spose you puff out a load of soot or sunnick."

"I'm not free to discuss it," said the Security Van man in a special lofty tone, clearly reserved for ending speculations of this sort.

"I bet you're not," said the pigeon man, his nose going suspiciously to and fro over the surface of his table like the needle of some seismograph. "'Ere, Jack, give this Formosa top a dust over if you're scrubbing out."

"What's up?" asked Jack, a little testily, coming over with his cloth. "Fussy in your old age? I never said a word about you bringin' these kite 'awks in, if we're on about 'ygiene."

"Never mind 'im, lads," the pigeon man reassured his birds, bending down to slide their hamper over with his shoe as Jack polished the table. "He won't bring 'is chopper out while I'm 'ere. I'd best get this lot down the station presently," he went on in a more practical vein. "They won't guarantee passenger train after two."

"Waste of time," announced the Security Van man, with pursed lips. "Wasta money."

"I don't spose you ever get time for any 'obbies yourself?" suggested the pigeon man tartly. "Too busy cold compressin' those bumps on yer 'ead when you keep getting coshed. Don't talk to me about wasta time, cocker. Not till they start payin' everyone by cheque or postal order—get blokes like

you off of the street. That'll be the day! You're a standing invitation, you are. Only wants a few blokes nick a Zephyr, and bash! Another wage snatch, and good bloody luck!"

"Thanks very much, very thoughtful," said the Security Van man coolly. "Only just tell me the sense: you going payin' fares for all these pigeons sittin' down in a railway train, so's some other nit can let 'em out to fly straight the way back. Oh yes, dead intelligent. Kyewf!"

"Bloke I knew got lumbered with a lot of pigeons, once," observed Jack. "Not what you might call dedicated, just his brother emigrated and goes and leaves them 'im. Cages, lofts, coupla stopwatches, or more clocks, really. Nineteen fifty five."

"Never advertised them, did he?" asked the pigeon man, his interest caught, despite his involvement with the enemy. "I expect not, though. Anyway," he resumed, "I can't see no 'arm with a few birds flyin' around. Not like 'umping loads of fivers to and fro about the streets."

"Still, I expect it might be a bit better when you got decimals," said Jack in a placatory tone. "All supposed to make it simpler, so we 'ope."

"You don't think that's going to do me out of a job, do you?" asked the Security Van man scornfully. "You're never going to 'ave blokes stop whippin' things, bar you get a religious revival. Any case, you won't get anyone wanting a cheque so long as the pubs won't take 'em. How," he demanded, "does a bloke go on with the money 'e gives 'is missus? You can't cut a lump orf of a cheque and 'and it over. Talk a bit of sense."

"Certainly you could, if they done them on a tear-off basis, like saving stamps," said the pigeon man. "I spose you reckon no one's thought of that."

"If they have, I 'aven't 'eard," said the Security Van man firmly.

"And don't want to," said the pigeon man, still smarting from earlier aspersions. "People like you just go about bankin' on the status quo. Don't want to know about progress."



"Good Lord, you remember that unpleasant character we met on holiday in August?"

The Security Van man snorted contemptuously.

"Oh, yes," went on the pigeon man. "You think it's a load of old rubbish. Only when Mr. Snelling here," he waved towards Jack, "talks about decimal coinage and ten pennies a bob instead of twelve, you reckon it won't make a blind bit of difference."

"I never said that," said the Security Van man. "I said it wouldn't do me out of a job. You still got to shift your decimals from A to B, mate. You still want protection."

"Not me, tosh," the pigeon man waved the suggestion aside. "It's *you* still needs the protection. Only the last armoured car they invented they couldn't get a licence on account of being too heavy for the roads. 'Ard luck, tosh."

"You want to talk about sunnick you

know sunnick about," advised the Security Van man. "Like pigeons, if you *do* know anythink about them. Any case, you're going to look a right 'nana if you don't get 'em orf at the proper time."

"First sensible thing you've said to-day, tosh," said the pigeon man, without rancour. "Best get down the station."

He gulped down the remainder of his tea and got to his feet. The Security Van man was already at the door and held it open with a grand gesture.

"Birds first," he invited, ironically.

The pigeon man lugged the hamper out from under the table and screwed his head round to reply as he picked it up.

"We all 'ave our prejudices, mate," he observed loftily. "It don't worry me one little bit if—."

"'Ere, watch it!" cried Jack. But there was a determined flurry from under the table and one of the pigeons winged its way rapidly out through the open door.

The pigeon man, startled, looked down at his hamper and rapidly shut the lid he had inadvertently pulled open.

"That's handy," he announced grimly. He went over to the door and gazed upwards, without any real hope of success.

The Security Van man was overtaken by a sudden spasm of coughing merriment.

"Dear, oh, blimey!" he wheezed. "Well done that man! It may be quicker by rail, mate, but they'd be a flickin' sight safer in our van. Dear, oh, dear!"

"Be a job for you when they start payin' by cheque," said Jack.

Chinese Wall-Newspapers, Please Copy

By PATRICK RYAN

IT is undoubtedly written in the stars, Cheng-fu, that one day you and I should meet. But it was kind of the *Observer* to hasten the day by publishing your poem at the end of Felix Greene's articles on China To-day.

FORLORN

(poem found in a Chinese factory wall-newspaper)

*The leadership is too careless
of my well-being; comrades
are not in the least polite to me,
In my work group all
simply criticise me! Who then
can I say is close to me?*

Patrick Ryan is the name, Cheng-fu. We are twin brothers of the lone and lorn and our spiritual mother is Mrs. Gummidge. You and I are but two incarnations of the same packet of megrims. I salute you, old Chinese camarado! Across the mountains and the deserts and the eastern seas of the world I give you my hand, from full five thousand miles I am close to you, despair speaks loudly to despair, I am you, you are me, your poem is my poem and that's Walt Whitman back there carrying the suitcase.

My leadership is criminally careless of my well-being; they are indifferent whether I stand up or fall down,

Everybody in the counting-house abuses me. They run weekly competitions to see who can worst humiliate me. In my ledger group, all about me is obloquy; colleagues keep black-lists of my mistakes, hold stop-watches on my lunch-hour and circulate notices

pointing out how much lower is my output than the norm.

I know just how you feel, Cheng-fu, old china. Forlorn, fed-up and every day a Monday. It's rough, I know, working your passage into the twentieth century. And it's no better when you get there. While you're building your dam with twelve billion hatfuls of mud or blowing through a pea-shooter at your back-yard blast-furnace, think on me in a glass-walled, human aquarium, adding up other men's money, desk-bound, mortgage-manacled and going down the Drain each night to be conveyed like a flesh parcel to the black-hole of the 6.15. . . We're all in the same junk, matey, doing what we do because we have to. You've got your commissars and we've got the Joneses.

But when next you walk through a storm with the hail-stones coming through your paper umbrella, be comforted that you never walk alone. There are finer Forlornists than you or I, Cheng-fu, both going on before and coming up behind . . . Long, long ago, friend Burton had each of us anatomised, happy, laughing Blaise helped us downwards with the *pensée* that everyone carries his own precipice, and Henry David knew our names when he



"Fer Pete's sake! Me religious disc dropped from the Pop Twenty and it ain't even Christmas yet!"

Man Decorating

by *Larry*



talked of the mass of men leading lives of quiet desperation . . . Lately, Thurber enrolled the short-piece peddlers by disclosing that "the little wheels of their invention are set in motion by the damp hand of melancholy"; and Fred Emney took out recent membership in telling the judge that when he fell off that camel-stool and lay broken-ankled in the circus mud, the only succour he received was "a bucket of hot water brought by the daughter of a clown."

So, weep not for me, Cheng-fu, and I'll not weep for you. One day we'll fix a meeting. You can show me those pathetic fragments of pig-iron, made in your kitchen-grate, which the Group-Leader rejected and, in the presence of your comrades' chattering Chinese ridicule, broke across your humble head. And I will show you my rejection slips and the three-and-a-half hundredweight of unappreciated manuscripts which we keep on the landing in a broken chest-of-drawers.

Happy, miserable hours we could spend, you and I, discussing the metaphysics of Forlornness and swapping examples of Life backing up on people. We won't understand a blind word we say to each other but we will have togetherness, won't we? And if the blues

really get us big we could put my paper and your scrap-iron into the back-boiler and see if we couldn't Bessemer up a decent gob of steel for you to take back. We might even find a dead tree somewhere and do a pidgin *Waiting For Godot*.

In the meantime, please do your best to carry on. Try Dale Carnegie. Or Liberace. Or Godfrey Winn. Every cloud has a horse-hair lining. It's a lovely day to-morrow, what a pity you just cut your throat. Laugh and the boss takes it personally. It's a long foo that has no goo.

I hope you won't mind, Cheng-fu, but, inspired by your poem, I took the liberty of translating it into the idiom of the Western Forlornist worker.

FORLORN

The top brass of this organisation are brute careless of my well-being and unconcerned whether I live unhappily or die of night-starvation. If someone invented an abacus that could answer the telephone and make tea, they'd install it in place of me. If I didn't turn up to-morrow there'd be singing but no sorrow among my comrades. They stand in line to insult me, contemptuously ever on their lips, hitting me with rolls of continuous stationery and mixing up my pins and paper-clips.

*Who then, outside Kafka, can I say is close to me?
Excepting you,
Only you,
Cheng-fu?*

Following your example, I submitted my poem to the Editor of the Counting-House Wall-Newspaper. And now, Cheng-fu, I am forlorn than you . . . He rejected it.

The Guardians

An MP was informed in the Commons that noxious fumes from power stations were primarily a matter for the Alkali Inspectorate and the Ministry of Housing.

O POTENT Minister of Power!
What news is this in danger's hour?

Pray, how and when did we create
The Alkali Inspectorate?

I see them—kindly autocrats,
With bits of litmus in their hats,
Parading early, testing late,
The Alkali Inspectorate.

The taste of tar is on our tongues,
The breath of hell is in our lungs,
But firm they stand 'twixt us and Fate—
The Alkali Inspectorate.

— E. S. TURNER



TWICKENHAM ROAR

The Oxford v. Cambridge match is previewed by H. F. ELLIS

MOST of the noise at Twickenham is supposed to come from the spectators, who handle this department of the game with a good deal of efficiency. They regularly applaud even the most feeble or unnecessary kicks to touch, so that a stranger might suppose the object of the game to be to get the ball out of play (a view that seems to be shared by a surprising number of players), and greet the award of penalty kicks with thunderous cheers—for whom? There has also grown up in recent years the habit of the Personal Ovation, a crescendo of clapping for the hero of some successful movement, subsequent to and quite distinct from the uproar that greets the actual score. (Try-scorers desiring to be saluted in this way can help by lying flat for a few moments after touching down, in order to ensure a solitary walk back afterwards.)

The University Match produces, I should say, a higher noise factor than any Twickenham International, and this year's encounter on December 12th ought to reach unprecedented heights because of the help likely to be given to the crowd by the Oxford team. Their captain Willcox, from his remote fastness at full back, exhorts and directs his side unceasingly in the voice of an

old-time mate chiding his tops' hands in a full gale, while Curry leads the forwards with a stream of reiterated cries that would not disgrace a Plymouth Rock that had just laid a dozen eggs at a go. So that from front and rear the voice of Oxford will be clearly heard whispering those last enchantments dear to Matthew Arnold; while from the touchline too (so they say) the amiable Mr. Dawkins is wont to cry "Here it is, boys!" as he propels the ball into the line-out. When I have seen Oxford play this season either Curry or Willcox has been absent, so that I cannot claim to have heard the team at full strength; but there cannot be a doubt that Cambridge are outclassed in sheer garrulity. They will start the game hundreds of decibels to the bad.

Oxford are not without talent in other departments. Sharp may not look quite so leisurely and unerring in his choice of what to do as in that wonderful season of 1959/60 (he has had a rough time in between), but he may still, if he lies low early on, win the game on his own. Stafford is a centre of considerable promise. The forwards may well prove better than Cambridge in the line-out and the loose, or so I like to think. And the team as a whole has had the advantage of starting so badly that they

were almost bound to improve, reaching a peak (however diminutive) on the day.

Cambridge, one regrets to say, also have a skilful and dangerous fly half in Waddell, probably the best centre in England in Wade, and an extremely powerful pack which really heaves together and is moreover disconcertingly quick on to any mistakes by the opposition. Their weak point as a team, for those in search of it, is that they have been so consistently good that they must be about due for an off day.

More hopeful, from an Oxford point of view, is the undoubted fact that the previous form of the two sides has not a great deal to do with it—not, at any rate, unless one of them is a really outstanding team, and Cambridge are not as good as all that. The University match itself is in an altogether different category from the preparatory club games. In ordinary games the players "warm up" by degrees. One can see it happening. "The forwards are getting down to it now," one says after ten or fifteen minutes—sometimes much longer, sometimes never. The tempo quickens gradually. In this affair at Twickenham there are no genteel preliminaries. A whistle and a roar (drowned on this occasion, I dare say, by a word from Willcox), and *wallop!* The two packs

meet, as the ball drops from the kick-off, with an impact that is almost gruesome. After the nervous days of waiting, the relief of being off at last adds about half a ton to the weight of every tackle. A demon desire to get there firstest with the mostest and settle the issue in the opening five minutes appears to afflict both sides. There is an access of supernormal vigour which tends, in the early stages at least, to discount skill. This sort of thing has its effects. A back who for a long time now has cherished a clear picture of himself slicing through the opposition like a knife through butter, only with more zig-zag in it, and who finds himself on first receipt of the ball mown down more suddenly and more emphatically than he has ever been

"We want a breather—get your pants torn to shreds."



mown down before, can be lastingly unsettled. Sometimes you can almost *hear* a side getting rattled. As to *which* side, that may be a matter of luck as much as anything—perhaps, in modern Rugby, it may be the side that has the misfortune to get the ball back from the first two or three scrums.

Great sides, of course, recover from a bad start and win. Sides that are merely somewhat better than the other lot may not recover, and lose. Which is what makes this match a little difficult to forecast accurately, about eight times out of ten. This year Cambridge are certainly the better side; but one is fully entitled to hope that the knowledge of that will be the only comfort they will get. Oxford will un-

doubtedly have a Plan to unsettle them. Perhaps Willcox and Curry are scheming not to say a word for the first twenty minutes, thus keeping Cambridge in a state of nervous suspense in the uncanny silence, like a man waiting for that second boot to drop. In any case, it is far too early yet to talk as if it was all over, bar the shouting.

Two final prayers:

1. Could those who are called upon to convert tries or kick penalty goals kindly get on with it? The trance-like pause, with heels together and lowered head, that precedes the run-up has now reached a duration only exceeded by high jumpers, pole vaulters and some of the more ascetic religious orders. Laws 24(a) and 25(c), referring to

penalty kicks and conversion kicks respectively, state clearly "The kick must be taken without undue delay." "Undue" here may be taken to mean "longer than any reasonable spectator can endure with patience."

2. Could not—it's impossible, of course—but could not the University Match take place at some other time than the absolute nadir of the year? Those last ten minutes, with Cambridge eight points up and Oxford penned in their own twenty-five, seen through the depressing murk of a dying December day, are not good for those of advancing years. On a bright day in March, when the daffodils are nodding in the gardens along Whitton Road, one could more easily take it. At worst one would be able to see it.



"And remember not to mention young Roger—he went over to Rugby League."

So It Became the Chamber of Horrors

E. S. TURNER celebrates the bicentenary of the birth of Madame Tussaud

THE Victorians enjoyed a delicate shudder as much as anybody.

What fun it was to shake the hand of a frail, respectable old widow who, as a young woman, had fingered the severed heads of Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette, Charlotte Corday (who stabbed Marat) and Robespierre!

This old lady, who married a feckless fellow called Tussaud, was born Marie Grosholtz on December 7 two hundred years ago (ignore the dates in the reference books). As a royalist she was lucky that the regicides in their "phrenzy" did not decapitate her too; instead she was invited to assist the cause of democracy by producing propaganda masks from her friends' heads, brought to her singly or by the basket.

It was a depressing, though ap-

parently not a traumatic, experience, and it never wholly distracted Marie from her chosen profession, that of a maker of superior wax effigies, an art she had learned in the studio of her uncle, Dr. Philippe Curtius, in Paris.

In 1802, after seven years of marriage, Madame Tussaud forsook her husband and native land and brought her collection, which now included the blade of the guillotine, to Britain. For more than thirty years she toured the country, the models repeatedly falling to pieces on the rough roads. Once the whole collection was sunk in a gale off Ireland; and in a Reform riot the effigies narrowly escaped incineration ("the flames of burning houses were mirrored in their unspeculative eyes," as *The Times* once put it). Gradually the Tussaud wax-works eclipsed rival

collections, including that of the legendary Mrs. Salmon, of Fleet Street, an undertaker's wife who used to sleep in a shroud under a pall, and whose chief attraction was a very naughty tableau of nymphs and shepherds.

Madame Tussaud advertised her collection as "patronised by His Most Christian Majesty Louis XVIII." Her uncle had featured a *Caverne des Grands Voleurs* in his collection and Madame also had a Separate Chamber or an Adjoining Room in which, for an additional charge of sixpence, "artists and amateurs" could see a number of highly interesting figures and objects which were kept separate "in consequence of the peculiarity of their appearance." This was the forerunner of the Chamber of Horrors. The occupants were mostly revolutionaries,



"Me too. Used to be able to whip him round the square in two minutes flat."

but outstanding criminals also qualified. Madame Tussaud had not supposed too full of horrors to shrink from taking a mask of the body-snatcher Burke three hours after his execution.

The early catalogues did not have the cold objectivity of the present-day one. What, Madame may have wondered, should she tell the British public about her first sitter, Voltaire, whom she had often heard quarrelling about metaphysics with Rousseau? Her catalogue said this of Voltaire: "His writings contain a considerable portion of wit and general learning; but they are not calculated for the perusal of youth, being mixed with much indelicacy and profaneness. The dross wants separating from the gold; were that operation performed by a skilful hand Voltaire would not only be read with pleasure but great improvement might be derived from the perusal of his works." Rousseau was a free-thinker, who "frequently wandered about with no other guide than the light of his own genius, till he lost himself in a labyrinth of absurdity." Madame's harshest terms were, of course, reserved for Robespierre, "the enemy of the human race," who was set all by himself "as undeserving a place among men." To-day Hitler appears to be a victim of the same policy of segregation.

Madame's catalogue was obsequious towards George III ("taken from life") and George IV ("mental qualities which seldom fall to the lot of Princes"). The breach between George IV and Caroline was "too delicate a subject to be here entered into"; but after the King's death a note was added: "we must observe that she was much to be pitied." Henry VIII was in the Robespierre class, "the hardest-hearted villain and the most consummate wretch that ever sat on a throne." Nothing controversial was said about contemporary British statesmen, who were mostly "distinguished for their oratorical abilities." For at least forty years the exhibition contained a figure of Emanuel Swedenborg and also of the Rev. John Clowes, of Manchester, who had spent forty years translating and publishing the seer's works.

Madame was assisted by her son, Joseph, who respectfully informed the nobility, gentry and the public in general that he had a Machine for taking profile likenesses, with the utmost



"I disapprove of anti-Americanism on principle—but frankly it's my only successful conversational gambit."

accuracy, at a charge of two shillings to three shillings according to style. To-day, no likenesses are made to private order.

Punch arrived on the scene in 1841 and at once took a close and even embarrassing interest in Madame Tussaud's "wax Valhalla." It mocked an advertisement of some Court robes "calculated to amuse and instruct the middle classes," and thought it time that Irish peasant robes were displayed for the amusement and instruction of the superior classes. In 1846 *Punch* described the Adjoining Room as the Chamber of Horrors, a name which was accepted more enthusiastically by the public than by the Tussaud management. In 1864 there was apparently an attempt to style the room the Chamber of Physiognomy. By 1880 *Punch* had decided that the Chamber of Horrors was nasty and demoralising and ought to be closed down; but it would be idle to pretend

that there was nation-wide support for such a proposal.

Time and again these pages contained fantasies describing indignation meetings or recreational outings by the denizens of Madame Tussaud's. Occasionally anxiety was expressed about the sufferings of the effigies in heat waves. There were regrets that Dickens had been given the canes and umbrellas to look after, that Earl Granville was "rather cruelly exposing to view the name and address of the maker of a very bad hat," and that various figures were grouped in "incongruous human salads." One year there was a complaint that many unsuitable effigies had been lent to an exhibition of English dress. Mrs. Manning, the murderess, appeared in a tableau of the times of Henry III and an Edward I group contained "Oscar Wilde before his hair was cut."

Madame Tussaud died in 1850 and was spared most of these cavillings.

She left an effigy of herself at the age of 81. Her family inherited not only her skill (the chief artist to-day is Mr. Bernard Tussaud, her great-great-grandson) but her conviction that a wax-works should be run as an exhibition not as a museum; which is the excuse for ruthlessly melting down any of the five hundred inmates whose celebrity has waned. Politicians, entertainers and sportsmen are always changing, but new criminals arrive less frequently than is sometimes supposed; Haigh, Heath, Christie, Petiot and Chessman are the only post-war additions. The Republic of Letters has a very slow turnover. This is decidedly not the place to find the likeness of a Wesker or an Eliot or even a D. H. Lawrence. Literature, in fact, seems to have ended with Shaw, Wells, Kipling and Hardy; which, in the view of the man in the street, is where it did end. There is no woman writer on view, not even Jane Austen.

The Foundress in that other Valhalla will be glad to know that the Sleeping Beauty's bosom still rises and falls as beguilingly as ever; that her effigies all wear underclothes, not for modesty but to make their clothes sit properly; that their hair (tresses from European convents) is regularly shampooed; that a fixed number of heads and hands are removed at six o'clock each morning for washing and that the statesmen get clean cuffs every week (incidentally there have been thirteen Winston Churchills, the first being shown on his wedding day).

Madame was doubtless shocked to hear, last year, that the figure of Mr. Antony Armstrong-Jones, as he then was, had been kidnapped by persons unknown and later found in a telephone-box on Savoy Hill, whence he was taken—all £500 worth of him, in evening dress—to Bow Street. That is thought to have been the first forced removal since the day the revolutionary mob demanded the wax heads of Necker and the Duc d'Orléans. These, after being borne in triumph, were shattered by sabres in that far-off blissful dawn.

☆

"FALLING OFF IN ATLANTIC SEA TRAVEL
BIGGER DROP THIS YEAR LIKELY
SHIPOWNERS' CONCERN"

—The Times

They could raise the height of the rail.

Warts and All

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

I WAS delighted to see a critic praising a radio talk in which a remark by the speaker—"I'm sorry, can I go back to the beginning?"—was accidentally left on the tape after editing: it gave the programme an unusual freshness, he said. If this is what the critics want, what have producers and performers and studio-managers been worrying about all this time? My next talk—on this very subject as it happens—can obviously go out in run-through form, and have the critics in ecstasies.

ME: I'm ready when you are.

PRODUCER: (from behind the plate-glass of the control-room, with a quacking intonation) We'll go on the minute then. Ten seconds from . . . now.

ME: Hrrrm, hrrrm! Hrrrm-hrrrm-hrrrm! Hrrrm, hrrrm!

PRODUCER: (as before, but impatiently) Go on then.

ME: Aren't you going to flash me a light?

PRODUCER: We flashed you'one.

ME: I didn't see one.

PRODUCER: All right, relax. Ted's coming in.

ENTER studio-manager with a questing look. He locates the green light in a serpent of cable, on the floor behind me, puts it on table.

S.M.: What clot put it down there?

PRODUCER: All right now? We'll go on the next minute.

S.M.: You want to be a bit nearer the mike. Can you hitch in to the table more?

ME: No, because the chair arms come up against it.

S.M.: Shove the table away.

ME: It's bolted to the floor.

S.M.: That's what they do. Give you a hanging mike that won't move, except up and down, and a fixed table. Just a minute.

PRODUCER: What's up?

S.M.: (into mike, which he has removed from its suspending string) Sorry Jack. Got to make it a stand mike. Table's bolted down.

PRODUCER: OK. But we've only got the recording channel until half-past.

S.M.: It's OK now. We'll try it about there. (Goes)

ME: I'm ready when you are.

S.M.: (from control-room, twiddling knobs) Give me a bit of level will you? Test the mike position?

ME: Mary had a little lamb, Its fleece was white as snow, and everywhere that Mary—

S.M.: Pull the mike in an inch.

ME: Like that? And everywhere that Mary went—?

S.M.: Back a bit.

ME: The lamb was sure to go? There was an old man of Devizes? Whose—?

S.M.: Fine.

PRODUCER: On the half-minute then. Five seconds from . . . now.

ME: Hrrrrrrrm-hrrrm! Sorry. Forgot to put my cough-sweet out.

PRODUCER: Hell. Never mind. We'll go on the minute. Have you got to



rush off afterwards, or should we go round to the Stag and have a beer?

ME: All right. I shall have to eat, too, though.

PRODUCER: We can get a sandwich. Ten seconds from . . . now.

ME: "Good evening. Good morning. Good afternoon." I don't know when you'll be putting this out. "I was delighted to see a radio critic praising a radio talk in which a remark by the speaker—"I'm sorry, can I go back to the beginning?"—was accidentally—"

PRODUCER: OK. Go back if you want to. We can cut that bit.

ME: I'm not going back. That's part of the script. Haven't you got a copy there?

PRODUCER: Sorry. I'm with you. Give us a second's pause and go on from where you'd got to.

ME: Right. (Pause) "Was accidentally left on the tape. He seemed to think that this freshened up the broadcast a good deal, and I must say I see his point. It was the same point, in a way, that the poet Herrick made . . . that the poet Herrick made about the 'sweet disorder in the dress.' Perfection in art can get boring in the end. I think it was the pianist Pachmann who purposely used to play a wrong note or two in his recordings to avoid the effect of mechanical perfection."

PRODUCER: Paderewski.

ME: What?

PRODUCER: Ted says it was Paderewski.

ME: I always thought it was what's-his-name, Pachmann.

S.M.: Paderewski. I did two years on *Music Magazine*; they always told it about Paderewski.

ME: Oh well, you should know. I'll start that sentence again. "I think it was the poet, pianist, I mean, Pacharewsky, dammit. Anyway, I'll make it vague. Wasn't it Paderewski who purposely used to play a wrong note or two in his recordings to avoid the effect of mechanical perfection? I don't see why this shouldn't be extended into full orchestral performances. I think the mechanical perfection of some of the Promenade concerts, for instance—"

PRODUCER: Sorry, I should have said before, I think we shall have to cut any reference to the Proms. I mean, the Corporation more or less runs



"OK, they've stopped the bleeding."

them now. They wouldn't like it upstairs.

ME: But I've got this crack about Malcolm Sargent conducting in his braces.

PRODUCER: Make it Mantovani.

ME: I'd better cut to the bit about the theatre. You know, about the refreshing effect of actors coming in the wrong entrances, and the prompts being belted so that they can hear at the back of the gallery.

S.M.: While we've stopped, you pulled back from the mike on the Paderewski bit. I managed to bring you up on the potentiometer but keep in closer, can you?

ME: About here you mean?

S.M.: Fine.

PRODUCER: Or you could cut to the books where you say authors can give up writing and just publish the first rough draft. If you could start again, bottom of page one, "I don't see why this shouldn't be extended," and pick up the middle of page two, "into the world of letters," then you could come back to the—just a minute: my phone's flashing.

S.M.: (spitefully) Anyway, this won't be anything new for the television boys. They're photographing each other's cameras all the time.

ME: I've a feeling my esses were hissing. Did you notice anything. (Testing) ssssstems of ssusspense. Ssss-ssss-ssse.

S.M.: It's OK.

PRODUCER: I say, I suppose you couldn't come back again this afternoon?

ME: Oh damn.

PRODUCER: Well I'm sorry. That was recording on the blower. They've had a tape snarl-up or something. Haven't got any of it so far. Just one of those things. Always has to happen when things are going well. I don't suppose we shall get it half as good next time.

And so it proved. I don't know whether it was the beer or the rehearsal, but when we came back at half-past two there was an utterly boring lack of incident. Nothing to edit out but a faint script-rustle at the bottom of page three. As far as the critics are concerned, I'm afraid it's going to be a dead loss after all.

Whatever became of . . .

. . . those rather jolly interludes at the cinema when the words of a new song were thrown on the screen and, as the music began, a little white ball began to bounce from syllable to syllable in time with the tune? Some words were mere stepping-stones, others were trampolines in which this clever Tinkerball would bounce two or three times before moving on; and what a flying leap it had to make to reach the start of the next line in time! You could screen these "shorts" today and the teenagers would queue for them; after all, they keep hailing the same songs as new and sophisticated. If only progressive vicars had taught the more difficult hymns this way the churches wouldn't be half-empty now.

—E.S.T.

Talk, Not Chalk

By R. G. G. PRICE

STUDENTS in training colleges are often taught that they can do more for the education of their charges by casual contacts out of school than by formal instruction; boys who chat in the playground with a Well Stored Mind become cultured painlessly. When I began teaching I made my first appearance on supervision duty rather apprehensively. I was thinking less about British foreign policy and how I could lead the conversation round to it by pretending to be reading *The Times* than about what to do if my charges suddenly tried to climb drainpipes and crashed to the ground. However, when two boys with

expressionless eyes and indecipherable badges solemnly accosted me I was prepared to give them the benefits of salon life. Before I could make any stimulating remark the bulgier boy asked, "Do you like the Head?" and his fellow socialite said, "His ears don't match." Both then waited quietly and politely for my views.

I knew that it was all important to gain their confidence, to start from their interests, to avoid nipping shy buds by adult frost. On the other hand, I also knew, from different sources, that unless you stamped immediately on breaches of discipline you had had it. I felt pretty certain that criticisms of the

Head were breaches of discipline. The next problem was how one stamped. If I sent them to the Head he might well reprove me for introducing unsuitable topics of conversation. He might also enquire the terms of my defence of him. I suppose my nicely balanced doubts must have been visible, as the first boy tugged at his companion and said "Come along. He can't say or he'd be sacked."

I was quite unprepared for this particular difficulty in communication because I had assumed that certain subjects would be protected by a code of rather old-fashioned decency; but I was surprised to find that in my early days one of my most frequent troubles was shutting boys up before their views of my colleagues and superiors became impossible to overlook. Quite a mild conversational opening on a Sunday walk was to ask me whether I thought any real Frenchmen would be able to understand the French master. As soon as I had enthusiastically claimed



"It's from Enid—she's been knocking for twenty minutes."

that they would find his French an improvement on that of most of their compatriots, there came the supplementary: "Does he sound Cockney in French?"

I decided to take a firm line and do a bit of good for myself by always replying to the first dangerous overtures by saying that I must be loyal to my friends and not discuss them. This, I should have realised, laid me open to the riposte that they wouldn't bear discussion. One boy used to use this known loyalty of mine in his opening remark: "Would you feel you could talk about Mr. Brown honestly, sir, or would that be disloyal to him?" was an awkward one to parry. My attitude when boys referred in the most matter-of-fact way to the Headmaster's daughters' deficiencies of aspect was shocked, but the boys interpreted it as embarrassed agreement.

Some schoolmasters are afraid of revealing ignorance of the technicalities of sport and transport. This never worried me at all. I soon discovered that all boys are teachers *manqués* and there is nothing they like more than instructing the uninstructed. I could always keep a walk happy, apart from fringe-walkers, by asking who held the record for number of maiden overs or what fuel-injection was or which was the fastest type of plane. Information flowed in on me and everyone was happy. My ignorance was taken to be some kind of adult deficiency calling for kindly assistance. I was as welcome as a champagne-glass to champagne. When I had to chase the fringe-walkers out of yards or away from girls my informants would impatiently second my efforts, hardly able to wait to drill me in the main classes of locomotive or the sporting career of Sheffield Wednesday.

Sometimes I would remember what I had been taught and try to turn the conversation to Politics or Ethics or Art. My pupils firmly turned it back. No doubt with more cunning I could have lured them from engine numbers and carburettors and penalty goals to the latest Motion of Censure or the Morality of Force or Picasso; but I lacked cunning. That was probably why I was a schoolmaster at all. The boys took the view that when they were sitting at desks it was my job to explain things to them, particularly things they did not feel uncomfortable at not knowing, but

THEN AS NOW

Three machines have been built to compete for the £5000 prize offered for a man-powered aeroplane that will fly a mile.



"My criticism is that it's neither one thing nor the other."

February 8 1939

that out of school the positions were reversed; they had a duty to me and were going to carry it out over any protests.

One of the enjoyable by-products of teaching is the extraordinary glimpses you get of how other people live, at least according to their children. Small boys will suddenly start describing an aunt or relating what happened when a cousin came to see them. Out of the blue come these spasms of recall and you listen goggle-mouthed to tales of families which stolidly eat through large meals while the piano-tuner is at work in the room, which buy and sell horses by telephone, which include uncles who display bullet wounds they claim to have got in Chester. Conversation about relatives never got quite as unbridled as conversation about the Headmaster and was easier to stop. You capped a story with an experience of your own and before you had finished they had turned away; the young do not regard conversation as dialogue.

My most baffling chat was with a German-Jewish refugee who arrived with hardly any English but a tremendous belief in the importance of making things go with a swing. On his

first appearance I was on duty. He ran up to me, shook me warmly by both hands, patted me between the shoulders and said "Can you the witty tale of the ferryman what shooted himself?" At least it was a change from propellers.

BLACK MARK . . .

. . . for people who confuse the issue when giving change by asking "Have you got the tuppence?" or "Got sixpence and I'll give you ten bob?" It baffles my simple mind from the start. I buy goods for 4s. 8d. and the chap behind the counter asks me for two pennies and launches me into a complex mental exercise. Meanwhile the coins are rattling into my palm and I leave the shop with the unwarrantable conviction that I've lost on the transaction. Or again, the change-giver will start his count from a different viewpoint than mine. While I'm struggling with the 4s. 8d. equation, he rushes into "Four and eight, a bob, five and eight, seven and eight, nine and eight and four makes ten!" Like a general attacked from an unlooked-for quarter I try to re-deploy my mental forces, but I'm defeated every time. Perhaps when the decimal coinage comes in it will be simpler. Perhaps.

Apathetic by-election polls suggest that public interest in politics needs stimulating in some

MEET OUR OPPOSITION!

Pen Pictures of our Visitors

Hughie Gaitskell: Took over as skipper from Clem Attlee when Clem was transferred to the Upper League. His cool, determined style of play has earned him the nickname of "the desiccated calculating machine."

George Brown: A thrusting player especially strong at Home. He will soon settle down in his new position of Chairman of the Organising Committee and we shall undoubtedly see a lot of him when the Election fixtures begin.

Harold Wilson: A versatile two-footed player especially skilful at keeping one foot in each camp when the team divides along the centre. Would have been in the running for the captaincy if there had not been a captain.

Denis Healey: His deceptively plodding style conceals the brilliant tactician underneath, and he will undoubtedly shine when he comes up against the big boys from the Colonies. He is strongly fancied to succeed Sir Stanley Rous in the FA.

Frank Soskice: After a mercurial career between 1945 and 1950, had the bad luck to be dropped by the electorate that year and, though he got into the side later, was again dropped in 1955. Now an established favourite with the voters.

Ray Gunter: A player to watch this season. He has not shone very brightly so far, but all the indications are that if he is played as General Secretary he will come on very fast.

Mick Stewart: Was tried out twice before the war, but failed to get into the side and devoted himself to coaching schoolboys. He has now been seen at the Gasworks for the past fifteen seasons, but so far has never achieved international status.

Doug Houghton: The "daddy" of the team, Doug was born in 1898. First discovered by the Inland Revenue Staff Association and transferred to Westminster in 1949. Played two seasons for the LCC as alderman.

Jim Callaghan: Another Inland Revenue Staff Association find, Jim has been at the Gasworks since 1945. He made his big-time debut at the Admiralty in Clem Attlee's side that got so soundly trounced by Winnie Churchill's team in 1951.

Pat Gordon Walker: After a season spent chiefly in feeding Herb Morrison on the right wing, Pat was moved back to take charge of Defence.

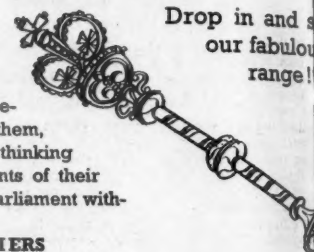
Fred Lee: The dark horse of the side, making his first appearance in the forward line this season. He is said to play too far out on the left wing for the comfort of most of his colleagues.

"The Speaker"

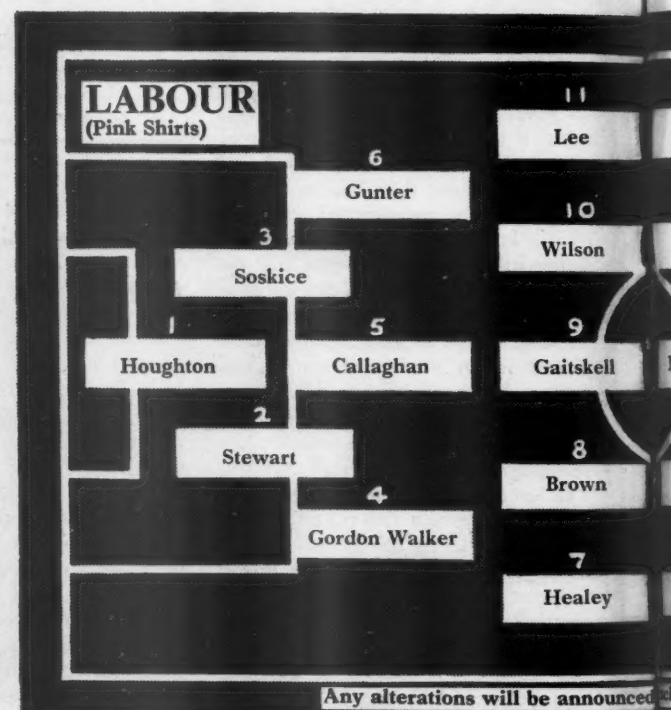
NEED A MACE?

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WESTMINSTER STADIUM, DECEMBER 11.



LOVELY G

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Ask for *Speaker's Special*—Jill

Mother of Parliaments used

This one should suit a large section of the sporting electorate.

THIS WEEK'S MINISTER

14 Reg Maudling

Tall, rangy Reg Maudling has always been the idol of the back benchers at the Gasworks. He's one of the local boys who have made good, as the saying goes. He was spotted as a youngster in the Conservative parliamentary secretariat, where his dashing style soon secured him an invitation to turn out for the Government. For the past couple of seasons he has been playing at the Board of Trade, but skipper Macmillan has now recognised his versatility by trying him out as Colonial Secretary. Fans who remember his neat "Common Market" style in the old position are confident that he will still score from his new office



Kick-off 2.30 p.m.

CONSERVATIVE (Blue Shirts)			
7 Sandys	4 Watkinson	2 Kilmuir	1 Butler
10 Wilson	8 Home	5 MacLeod	3 Hill
9 Mitskell	9 Macmillan	6 Brooke	
8 Brown	10 Lloyd		
7 Lealey	11 Maudling		

announced change of letters in "The Times."

G N B!

monstrous restaurant?
al—like the
used make



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(Office behind statue of J. Chamberlain in lobby)

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DYNAMIC DUNCAN SANDYS RELIES ON TOTPRUFE



"Right from the start," says Dunc, "I realised that if a politician really wants to reach the top flight the most important thing is the crease in his trousers. Not all of us are lucky enough to have to stand with Commonwealth Prime Ministers on saluting bases in the monsoon season, but we all have to take the kiddies on our laps from time to time and you know what that means. Throughout my career I have found that you can rely on Totprufe trousers in any circumstances. It's Totprufe for me."

TRY TOTPRUFE AND SEE

THE SEEDING TWENTIES by Gwyn Thomas



1 A PALING DARKNESS

WHEN I was about eleven the nip of autumn was mitigated by a whiff of depravity from the senior reaches of the Band of Hope. We had been drafted into the chorus of a junior operetta of the *Merry Widow* type that involved a lot of fondling, waltzing and bussing. Deacons would appear briefly at the door of the vestry in which we did our rehearsing and say that the piece was nothing more than propaganda for a bland sensuality. And indeed we warmed to this story of Viennese smooching, and as the melodies and words slipped into our blood-stream you could hear the laces of our moral stays go snapping to ruin. After rehearsals couples were seen drifting up into the lane behind the vestry, and even the glow-worms dipped their hindlights in respect. Deacons flashing cautionary torches into the shadows used up a battery a night, and the more vigorous amorists were told to stay away from the backwall of the vestry, which was in a subsidence zone and liable to crumble under any major pressure.

Alongside this a small wave of thieving was detected. A store of the Woolworth sort had opened in the town. The long, open counters with their rich variety of gew-gaws threw a splash of heat on minds made frigid by an Arctic economy. Bands of youths massed together and ravaged the counters as brutally as Jutes. Five shopgirls had dangerous hysteria at the sight of so much movement among goods having so little effect on the till. The manager wired off to Woolworth to ask him what he had done wrong. Two shop-girls were seen playing a kind of demented chime on two tills that had not taken a penny between them. The moralists linked this with the Viennese revels in the vestry, and the defenders of honesty and chastity raced up to their watch-tower, the trumpets of warning to their lips. A local historian suggested that the whole action was the last part of a deal initiated by the Phoenicians, a race that had once done a fair amount of loose bartering around Siluria.

Solutions were offered. The operetta group was told to

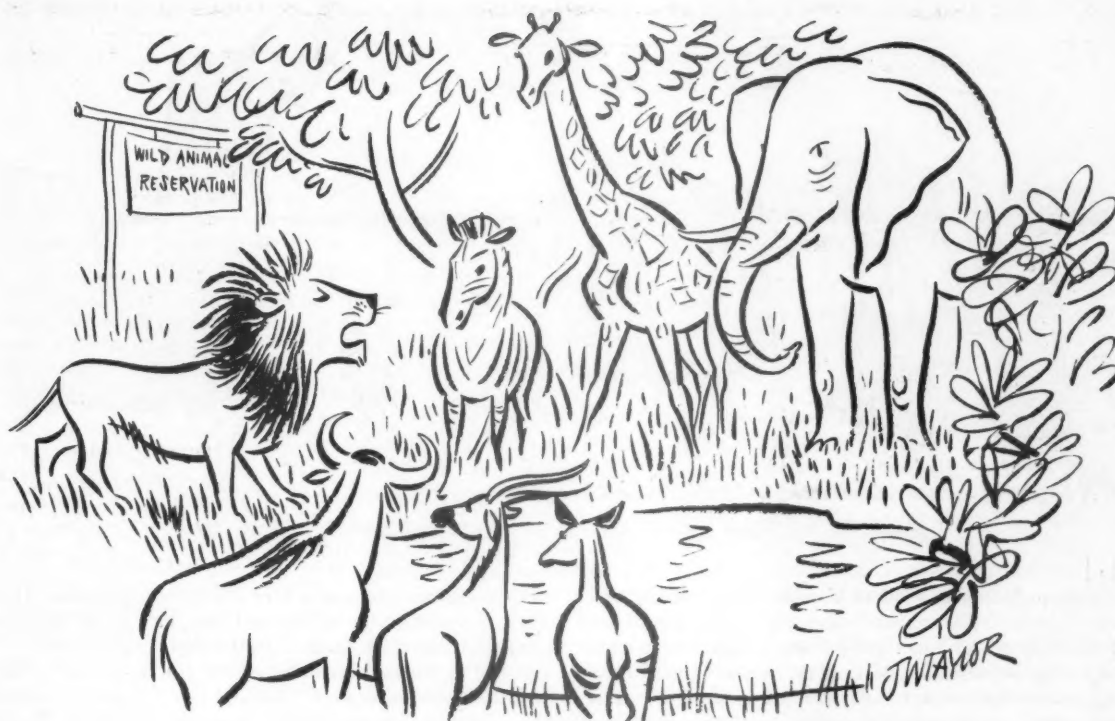
tackle no theme earlier in time than the Book of Genesis. The multiple store manager was told to narrow his doors, higher his counters, make his counter-display more forbidding, his goods less portable and arm his shopgirls.

Into this situation walked Seithenyn Hamer, a Meadow Prospect boy who had spent twenty years as one of the most zealous missionaries to leave these shores and confuse the people of Africa and Asia. Hamer had covered more territory than a migrant stork and had had some narrow escapes. He had been nearly eaten by some Andaman Islanders who had only abandoned Hamer, a lean and craggy man, when some likelier looking dish turned up. An acolyte on whom Hamer had been trying out the theory that ground rhinoceros horn had a powerful aphrodisiac effect had turned on Hamer when crazed with depletion and tried to float him over the Victoria Falls. A rubber planter had had him speared for spreading dissension among his workers. Hamer had some phobic objection to rubber and had slowed down the production of the stuff as drastically as leaf rust.

Hamer's meetings in Meadow Prospect's Central Hall were very successful. He brought the evangelical urge of the place back to red heat. I have often wondered about the sight and sound of such a man on Peter the Hermit, who poured the scalding urges of mediaeval Christendom over an already fluid situation in the Middle East. I would say that Mendel would have had Hamer and the Hermit tabbed as springing from the same pod. Hamer convinced his audiences that a few major doses of missionary zeal would put paid not only to the mild outbreaks of venery in the Band of Hope, and the raiding tribesmen who had stripped the multiple store to the bare boards, but also to the fits of rancour and spite that were currently making our local industries hop and grimace.



"Miss Tripp of Soft Toys doesn't believe in me."



"... coupled with the names of Alan Moorehead, Peter Scott and Sir Julian Huxley."

One of Hamer's loudest devotees was Miss Jocasta Gee, a sweet looking but stern woman, a daughter of our Sunday School superintendent, Mr. Moelwyn Gee, a builder, a stony, Mosaic figure who liked nothing better than to stand above some young offender, not saying a word and just touching the youth's brow with his beard. I list among the ten most truly odd sensations of my life the routine of being silently brushed by Gee. One wondered about what sort of moral carpet one was going to land on, and that was about the only sort of thought possible in the context. Having a lot of short pupils, as one is bound to have in a Celtic Sunday School, it meant that Gee needed a long beard. It was very long and never failed to make contact.

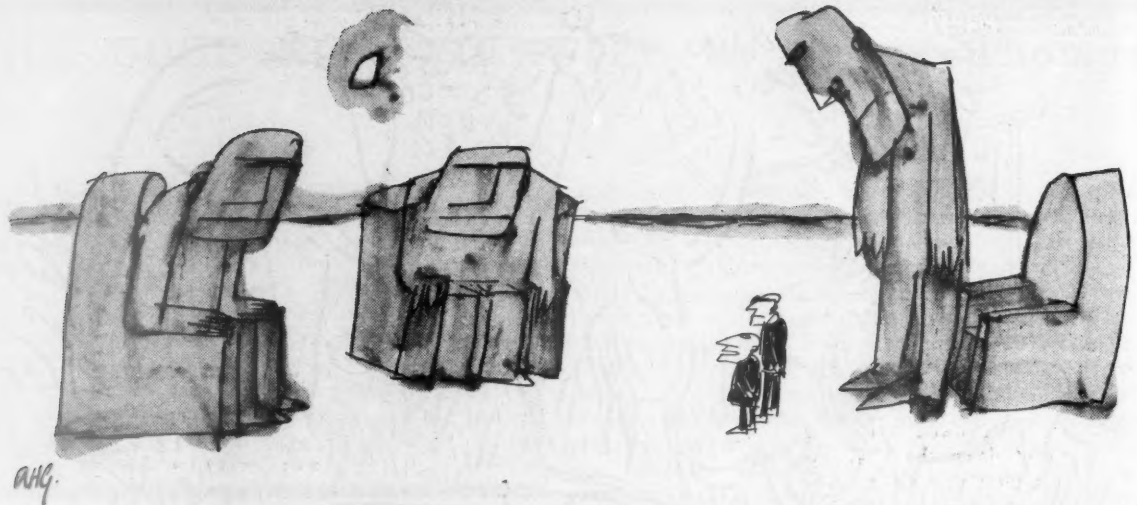
Hamer had written a whole fleet of sketches showing the hazards and beauties of missionary work. My teacher in Standard 4, Kingsley Pugh, was very fond of Miss Gee and he rushed forward at her suggestion that he should produce these sketches. Pugh whipped me in as a leading actor. He was convinced that these playlets projected by child performers would purge the zone of lust, looting and class-enmity. He saw them as being of particular benefit to me. As my body shook with the first tremors of adolescence, my mood had become sullen and caustic. Absurdity and deprivation were beginning to rub raw on my flesh. I was beginning to get the full, minatory measure of an environment that was going to leave me as pitted as a Swiss cheese. My head was beginning to fill up with a gravel of hard, philosophic thoughts. I was found shaking my head wearily at the Sunday School teacher. I was seen pencilling crude Marxist footnotes on

the bases of missionary placards, and I was even suspected of being one of a group that had removed a ladder from the front of a house on which Moelwyn Gee had been doing some job of roofing. Pugh meant to put an end to all that.

He launched me on a world canter that still has me feeling that I have the continents beneath me like so many fields. Miss Gee made our costumes in her front-room. It was a small room and she had a wild hand with the needle, and all the costumes looked flimsy and the same. It didn't much matter because in each sketch I was a fractious young peasant with his ear in the mouth of some local Mao Tse-tung and dead against missionaries. During my fittings Mr. Gee always sat in the room, rolling his beard between his hands, trying to put me right on doctrine and pumping me about my part in that ladder job.

Hamer's plots had been hammered into a rigid pattern by the starkness of his own experiences. In one sketch I would be a Malayan boy whose father is about to be sold up for back taxes. The missionary comes along and I come out with some Buddhist runes and challenge his Yahveh to change the world's tax policy. The missionary kneels and asks that I have patience, that salvation will come. It does not come, but the tax man does and my father is carted off to gaol and the house dispossessed. I run into the jungle, furious. I am bitten by a snake. The missionary sucks out the venom. I see a new truth and persuade the local radicals to turn their banners into Zenana League sashes and go back to their paddy fields.

And so on, around the globe. I became one of the most



"I wonder for how many countless generations these Colossi have been sitting here."

significant puffs in the wind of change. The pattern never varied. Insolence, resentment, rage, flight, then trouble and salvation. As an African I get it from a rhino and the missionary slaps some healing leaf on my groin. Cured of the goring and my ignorance I pacify the tribe. As an Arab boy I get it from a camel bite and the missionary cleans the wound with a simple pen-knife and the camel follows us around trying to express a change of heart as nearly as a camel can. The muttering Bedouin take one look at my transfigured face and shut up. As a Pueblo Indian maltreated by a tourist whose change he has tried to shorten in a trinket booth, my fractures are set and I am persuaded to give my trinkets away free with inscriptions on them about the need for a brisker trend in ecumenical affairs. I also break up a meeting in praise of the ancient Sun Gods and persuade the people to come down from those holes in the cliff, and build a chapel on the flat, on land donated by the tourist with whose change I had interfered. He was very keen to get the chapel built quickly so that if he found his change beginning to float again he would know where to come for me.

My performances were watched with interest and widening eyes by the left-wing in Meadow Prospect. They denounced me as the most inscrutable acre in the whole blurred map of our political disputes and social malaise. They dredged up some voters in the Library and Institute, ex-soldiers, ex-sailors or just liars in training, who came along to me with stories of missionaries who had been little more than dupes and tools in the hands of ruthless salesmen and they even suggested that I had seen Hamer himself draining away, by means of shady practices, what little light remained on the Dark Continent. With regard to those offensive rhinos, camels, tourists, and so on, that had run me down, I could take their word for it that Hamer had probably been behind them, guiding and directing them as weapons in the endless war to blunt the hopes of the progressives. But I reacted torpidly to these tales. Pugh, Miss Gee and Hamer had me in thrall. My brain had been washed so clean it lit up my part of Meadow Prospect. If I saw anybody in the town

who looked as if he might turn out to be a muttering tribesman, I would go up to him and urge him to cut it out and come to terms with decent loyalties and honest labour. The last bid of the radicals to break my run as Hamer's puppet was to present me with a "put-and-take," a simple gambling device which was spreading a fever of gaming through the gulch, that had the older prophets stepping forth, shaking the ash from their togas and pointing to the moon, which at that season was red and baleful. I threw the "put-and-take" into the river with a gesture that was later copied by Fiorello LaGuardia.

What was more I sincerely wanted to help Pugh. If, I argued, my work in the missionary sketches would help him in his courtship with Miss Gee he might become so happy in marriage that he would forget about his ambition to make me the major valve in Meadow Prospect drama.

Miss Gee accepted him. A large tea was given in the vestry as a way of thanking all who had helped in producing Hamer's cycle of improving playlets. Mr. Moelwyn Gee was there and at the sight of so much tea and innocent gluttony even his dogmatic furies took a rest and did little more than let out a quiet bark as a token gesture of alertness.

Pugh bought Miss Gee an expensive engagement ring. The wedding was to take place the following spring, and the couple would leave the church under a human arch made up of people from the YMCA gymnastic group, who had been on loan to Pugh to simulate mutinous tribesmen hellbent on scaling forts and missions.

The marriage never came off. A week after the ring was handed over Miss Gee left Meadow Prospect with Hamer. They made their way to Waziristan, where they operated a mission in the hills from a rough hutment. Hamer's luck stayed bad. Almost at once the tribes, under that Fakir, started to simmer. If Pugh could have saved enough money and collected his thoughts sufficiently after that concussion he got from the ring deal, that is where he would have sent me, just to see whether drama and life ever do really meet.

Next Week: Scalping Party

Progress of a Poet

By STANLEY PRICE

"I believe that every poet should read our English classics, master the main grammatic rules before daring to bend or break them; should travel abroad, be at ease among all sorts and conditions of men, and experience not only the horrors of thwarted passion, but, if he is fortunate, the tranquil love of an honest woman."

Robert Graves, in his Inaugural Lecture as Professor of Poetry at Oxford University.

LOOKING at Pedwod Preece as he cycled down the High, or scurried into Hall, nobody would have called him an aesthete. In fact the only word that would have sprung to mind was nondescript . . . an egg-stained college-tie, an old sweater under an undistinguished sports-jacket, a cheap cigarette dangling from his lips, a bit of dandruff here, a spot of nicotine-stain there, and baggy trousers bulging out of his bicycle-clips. Yet underneath all this Pedwod questioned himself. Always he asked himself the same question—could he become a poet? Could he become an English poet? Coming from Llanelly was it even worth trying? He could see the reviews already "Pedwod Preece, that thin five o'clock shadow of Dylan Thomas, has once more . . ."

The lecture at the Oxford Playhouse changed all that. Pedwod stopped questioning himself. He was even reconciled to his draughty digs in Cowley and the long bicycle rides to North Oxford for his weekly tutorial. "Preece, you're beginning to use plural verbs with plural nouns. A big improvement on last year . . ." And no wonder, for Pedwod, impervious to the draughts of Cowley and the noise of the pickets outside Pressed Steel, was already through Beowulf and fast approaching Chaucer. Soon he was out the other side of Chaucer and into Mallory and Spencer. "Preece, it's remarkable but you're not splitting infinitives any more," his tutor said, but Pedwod didn't hear him for he was already out of the door and half-way back to Cowley to finish the Elizabethans and discover the Metaphysicals. By the middle of the Lent Term he had

started writing in his own notebook—

*"Let not my music fall on deafened ears.
Spring song I sing
To banish winter's fears.
Let blossom grow, and tiny buds unfold,
And birds take wing,
And youthful flowers grow bold."*

By the end of the summer term Pedwod had finished Milton, Dryden and Pope, and fallen in love. At least he wasn't sure whether he had fallen in love himself, but very definitely Hylda had fallen in love with him. Already she had knitted him a tennis sweater and a pair of mittens for the winter. He had met her at the North Oxford Tennis Club, where he was taken by his tutor, now most impressed by the change in Pedwod's demeanour and language. Pedwod had played mixed doubles with Hylda on that very first occasion, and they had partnered each other thereafter. Hylda wasn't very good at tennis, or very pretty, but she was nice. There was something about her. She was the first woman who had

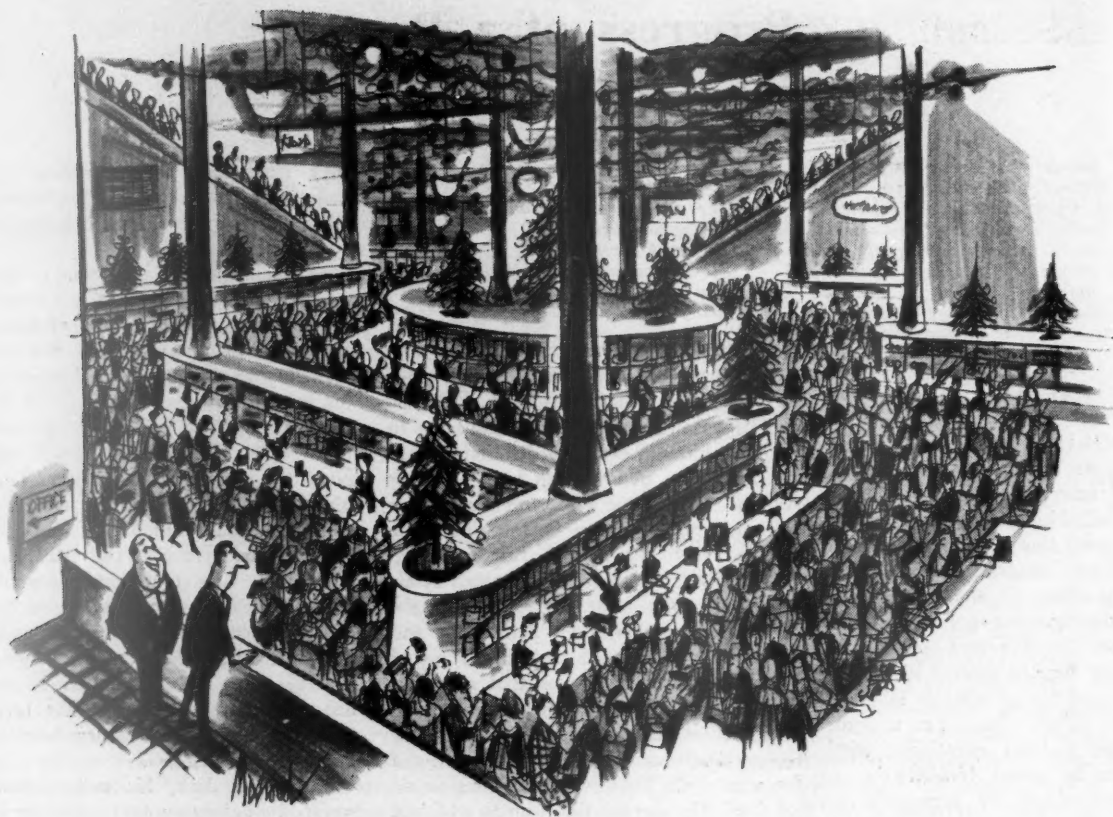
ever liked him, and somehow that cancelled out the age difference between them. Hylda was thirty-nine, but she was honest about it.

On the last day of that summer term Pedwod decided he must go abroad. He was unhappy about his notebooks. He needed new horizons if he was ever to write that soaring poetry, his poetry, his own magnificent marriage of the modern and the Apollonian. He went to a travel agent's local branch, and booked a passage for himself and his bicycle to Boulogne. From there the continent would unfold for him—the Massif, the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Apennines. Like stout Cortez he would scale the peaks and gaze at the oceans of experience beyond. Yet, even as he bought his ticket, he thought of Hylda. Was he being disloyal to her? Would he commit treason against her love? Would he betray her somewhere between Boulogne and Brindisi?

Sitting on deck, his college scarf wrapped tightly round his neck,



"Dammit, girl, of course I want it gift wrapped!"



"Look at that, Simpson! Who said Christianity was dying?"

Pedwod got his notebook and pencil out of his duffel-coat pocket. He breathed the rough sea-air and wrote—

*"The tripper-seasoned ship
Undulating sickly in the summer storm,
Tight fat bottoms strained against her
rails,
Their anguished owners heaving hugely
Into the sea.
Joined to the sea;
The sea surround them.
Sick and at one."*

He wondered if he had broken too many rules too soon. He thought of Hylda. He put his notebook and his pencil back in his duffel-coat pocket and joined the people at the rail.

The tantalising odour of Boulogne welled up at Pedwod from the quayside. Sick with excitement, he was too weak to cycle. He pushed his bicycle to the nearest bistro. Inside it was very French—the smell of Gauloise, and of Frenchmen and Frenchwomen. He suddenly felt at ease among them. He ordered a beer, and then he saw the

woman. She was not like Hylda, or like any of the other women he had ever seen. Her hair was blonde as sun-bleached driftwood, her lips red as fresh blood, and she wore black silk stockings that hissed as she walked.

"Chéri," she said, and he knew then that he would betray Hylda.

That night she made him bring his bicycle into her room. "Tous les matelots sont voleurs," she said. And much later he crept out of bed to write in his notebook—

*"Outside, dark silhouette of ships:
The smell of sea and fish.
Inside, silhouette of wheels and saddle,
Her old washing on the line,
Strung in ghost shapes
Above my head.
Above her bed.
Slipping away into oblivion,
In guilt and joy
Sick and at one."*

He no longer cared about breaking the rules. At last he was free.

July slipped into August. His French improved, and on week-days he

went out only to buy new notebooks. Only at week-ends, when the sailors were in town with their pay-packets, did he realise the horrors of being thwarted. Then, sitting with his bicycle in the damp mist of the quayside, he knew jealousy and despair, and he wrote—

*"Parted from passion,
Three-parts poisoned,
But peering to sea,
Poised on the shore
Among the putrefied fish
And decaying bones
Of cats,
Like me,
Green-eyed, long-since gone,
Wasted in death,
And the long prelude of despair."*

He knew it was the best yet, and he blessed the sailors, and his thwarting.

Boulogne in October. The end. And yet the beginning. Pedwod wheeled his bicycle along the quayside, and for once he knew what lay ahead—Oxford, his last Michaelmas Term, Hylda, and then—acclaim.

Essence of Parliament

NOBODY can blame Mr. Heath for the leak of his Common Market speech nor does there seem any reason to suspect any British leaker. Nor, though the speech was fairly innocuous, can anyone deny that negotiations are only possible if working documents are kept confidential. To that extent Mr. Gaitskell was obviously playing party politics in pretending that there was an insult to the Commonwealth. Mr. Birch accused Mr. Gaitskell of being "mischievous, dishonest and typical." On the Speaker's demand Mr. Birch withdrew "dishonest," which left him with "mischievous and typical"—which was about fair but perhaps no great insult. It is the business of the Opposition to be mischievous. I wonder exactly what Mr. Bowles meant by saying that the Government's treatment of the Commonwealth was worse than Lord Curzon's treatment of Elinor Glyn. Wary Mr. Heath was not to be drawn into that one. "I do not know what Lord Curzon did to Elinor Glyn," he replied. Nor for that matter does anybody else—exactly.

They returned to the Heath-hunt again on Wednesday and he then had to dodge brickbats from in front and from behind. The attack this time was that the speech had given it away that Mr. Heath had committed the Government to political implications which had been concealed from Parliament. Mr. Heath's reply was a bland denial, and the text seemed on the whole to support him. He is growing in stature. Where he used to giggle he now answers and he came out of it fairly well. They were also after him about Katanga, Mr. Healey arguing that the United Nations should have had a stronger policy and Mr. Paul Williams that it should have got out altogether. There is much to be said for it that we should have done either the one or the other and, as it is, have fallen badly between two stools. But no one can seriously pretend that that was all Mr. Heath's fault.

The tagging on of an extra six months to some poor boys' conscription is not a very glorious business, and it is not easy to see how it is going to solve anything much unless there is a dramatic improvement in the international situation within six or ten months, of which there is little sign. But the Government are sitting pretty against the Opposition because the Opposition is no more willing than the Government to advocate conscription, and, whatever may be done about commitments, they obviously cannot be cut at five minutes' notice. Therefore, as between the two openers, Mr. Profumo and Mr. George Brown, it was a draw at 0-0. This gave an opportunity to Mr. Aubrey Jones to crack in and accuse both parties of putting party before country. Mr. Aubrey Jones has not, it seems, quite made up his mind whether he is going to play young Mr. Disraeli or to stay in business, but he did it all rather

impressively. One needs dark hair for that sort of thing. Mr. Birch weighed in to agree that selective service was inevitable as did Colonel Wigg from the other side. There was a row at the end because Mr. Ramsden was put up to answer instead of Mr. Watkinson. It is the first time that I have ever known anybody make a row because Mr. Watkinson was not going to make a speech.

Tuesday was Public Investment. It is doubtless an enormously important subject, but it is not one that makes easily for a lively debate, and debates that are opened by Mr. Henry Brooke and Mr. Mitchison are not apt to be easily lively anyway. These two counter comedians follow one another round from department to department, emptying chamber after chamber with their speeches on its estimates. Not even Dame Irene Ward can take it, and the gallant Sir Winston sat out some few minutes until Mr. Brooke said

But Brooke goes
on for ever

"And then we come to the record of the Labour Government up till 1951," whereupon he rose to his feet,

bowed to the Chair and walked out to celebrate his eighty-seventh birthday in some more salubrious fashion. The Brooke, like Tennyson's, seemed destined to go on and on for ever. The Opposition, in order to point the contrast with the inefficiency of Government here, has suddenly developed a great enthusiasm for the way in which productivity has been increased in France and we heard a lot about how well things were done over there. No Member on either side saw fit to mention that as a matter of fact, while the debate was going on at Westminster, there was a general strike in France and you could not light an electric light and could hardly find a running railway train in the whole country for love or money.

Wednesday was an even duller debate, this time on coal.

It was only relieved by a characteristic sally from Mr. Nabarro, who roundly declared that Mr. Wood ought to have resigned because of the Electricity award. Mr. Wood sat there with a face roughly the same colour as the red carnation in his button hole. How all this could be in order in a debate on coal, only God and Mr. Deputy-Speaker could know, but desperate diseases require desperate remedies, so nobody had the heart to pull Mr. Nabarro up. Mr. George wound up for the Government but what he said nobody will ever know. It appeared that Lord Robens was free to negotiate any wage agreement that he saw fit but would be very

naughty if he negotiated an agreement that the Government did not like. It reminded one of those theological theses in which we are told that we are free to choose our future course of action but that God in His infinite foreknowledge already knows our choice—only God is not an Under-Secretary.

There was that day a better debate in the Lords on hospital services—better because it was run by doctors like Lord Evans rather than by politicians. It seems that the present shortage of doctors is desperate and the recommendation of the Willinck Committee of a reduction of ten per cent in medical students dotty. The facts about our dependence on Indian and Pakistani doctors was a frightening comment on the exclusion of immigrants. Talking of dottiness, Lord Morrison rounded off the evening by saying of the LCC scheme, "The Government is mad," but then, when Lord Morrison dies, doubtless we shall find LCC written upon his heart.

Thursday was Sir Winston's actual birthday, and he received full-throated applause from all Members when he entered, leaning on his stick.

— PERCY SOMERSET



MR. HEATH

In the City



Three Good Big 'uns

THREE recent reports from Industry make reasonably satisfactory reading. They are those from the British Motor Corporation, the Birmingham Small Arms Company and Metal Box.

In each case there is a clear awakening to the challenge of the Common Market. It needed no leak of what Mr. Edward Heath had said to the Ministers of the Six to convince the men at Longbridge that the Common Market is approaching fast and that before long BMC, together with the rest of British industry, will at one and the same time be fighting new competition at home and grasping new opportunities in Europe.

As Mr. G. Harriman, the new Chairman who recently succeeded Sir Leonard Lord, said in his first statement to shareholders, the group has not been idle while awaiting the outcome of the Government's application to join the Common Market. How well the company is ready for this challenge is shown by the fact that in the past four years BMC exports to Europe as a whole have advanced by 79 per cent and are still rising. This figure compares with the 54 per cent increase in exports of British manufactures as a whole. The company has the right range of models with which to battle into Europe. The Austin Seven and Mini-Minor are said to be selling like hot cakes both at home and abroad.

This company has for long had its detractors in investment circles. How wrong these critics have been is shown by an instructive table in the last report showing the net dividends paid to shareholders in the group since 1947-48 when £1,167,000 was distributed to 1960-61 when the total was £5,372,000. Disregarding the year 1958-59, when a special interim was declared, the progression in dividends paid has been unbroken—a rare feat among British companies, and one

bordering on the miraculous in the motor-car industry, which is now the traditional buffer used by the Government to take the main shocks of its "stop and go" economic controls.

The latest report from BSA—also presented by a new chairman, Mr. Eric Turner, who follows Mr. J. Y. Sangster—is somewhat less ebullient. The profit has shown a modest reduction in spite of an increase in the group's turnover. The dividend remains unchanged, after making allowance for the scrip issue, and it is well covered by earnings.

The BSA group of companies is rapidly changing its character. The former dominance of motorcycles and scooters is making way for that of the machine tools side of its activities. In 1960 this represented only 19 per cent of the group's turnover; in 1961 this had risen to 26 per cent and with the acquisition of the Churchill Machine Tool Company, the main event of the year, that proportion is likely to rise.

The advent of the Common Market is bound to create some difficulty for this, as for many other companies, but the chairman cheerfully says "I do not anticipate any disastrous consequences." In fact BSA are already having discussions with some leading Continental companies to see if they can enter into cross-licensing arrangements and agreements for the general exchange of information.

Finally, and perhaps most promising of them all, is Metal Box whose name is becoming a misnomer. It packages not only in metal, but in paper, cardboard and to an increasing extent in an ever widening range of plastic materials. A world of self-service stores seems to be made for a company such as this. Earnings during the past half-year seem to be running at the rate of over 26 per cent, giving a generous cover for the dividend of 12 per cent. On this basis the shares yield just under 3 per cent—meagre but still attractive in view of the prospect.

— LOMBARD LANE

In the Country



Turkey Traditional

ONE of the accessories of the good old-fashioned Christmas which I, for one, can merrily do without is the turkey which had been walked the eighty odd miles from Norfolk to his destiny (with tar on the soles of his feet to prevent blisters). He must have borne about the same relation to our modern birds as Dr. Barbara Moore to Mlle. Brigitte Bardot. The Pickwickian Christmas roast comes a bad second when compared with the end product of a dash down a motor-way in a refrigerated van.

Luckily there is little chance that my turkey (or yours) will have done much walking as the great majority are reared so intensively nowadays that they are never free to walk more than the few yards to the opposite wall. My turkey will be a hen because I want a bird of under fifteen pounds dead weight (10½ lb. eviscerated) to match my

twentieth-century appetite and household. The bigger stags are usually sold to the catering trade.

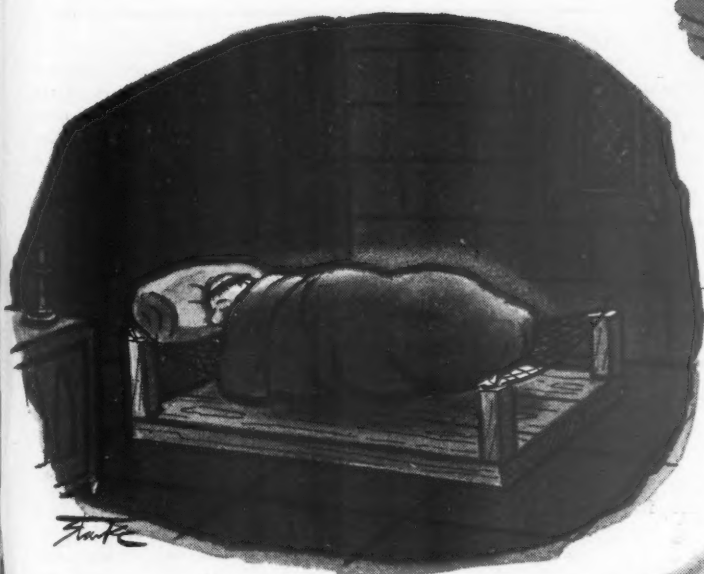
I can also reveal that your hen will have been killed at twenty to twenty-two weeks because the turkey finds it more difficult to put on weight the older she grows. (More than happy turkey hen!) Up to twenty weeks old she fattens at the rate of one pound of flesh for every four of food, but after that she needs seven or eight pounds of food to achieve the same increase.

In one way I do regret the passing of the old days. The feathering was a social event held under such conditions of haste and frenzy that it was an unforgettable experience. Nowadays electric stunners, scalding plants, plucking machines, wax baths and deep freezers have put an end to those urgent orgies of blood, feathers and home-brew. The very best hand-plucker might just manage twenty birds a day, but a modern machine doubles that output with no effort.

Turkey farmers are not satisfied with your appetite for their product. As you want it only at Christmas, you eat in one year little more than ½ lb. each. The Americans manage over 6 lb. in the same time, so you are going to be conditioned to regard the turkey as a year-round food.

You already start your Christmas shopping earlier and yet earlier, so why not your Christmas eating too? Eat now and avoid the Christmas surfeit!

— LLEWELYN WILLIAMS



"Come to think of it—did they have any gardens at Assisi?"



CRITICISM

AT THE PLAY

Out of My Mind (LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)

Big Soft Nellie (THEATRE ROYAL, STRATFORD)

JILL IRELAND is very pretty and sings nicely; Patricia Routledge is very funny and sings well; there were five or six tolerable numbers and one excellent one in a total of thirty-seven. The excellent one was a quartet of monks and nuns rejoicing, with really interesting music, in the revival of religion on the London stage. In the first half of the show I enjoyed Gillian Lynne's song about the sinister Martian shrub and Miss Routledge's about the lady who lived in a house with rose-

coloured windows, a concerted number called "Recognition," about a man whose talents were more discussed than appreciated, and the "White Collar Spiritual" that preceded the interval. There was also a song called "Love in Unexpected Places" that I believe I should have found funny if I could have heard the words.

In the second half there were the religious and Miss Routledge again in a song about a girl who went through her wedding ceremony entirely on her own.

There, no one can say I haven't leaned over backwards to be fair to *Out of My Mind*.

To those responsible for devising this featherweight entertainment I turn a countenance more in sorrow than in anger. Where have they been living? Theirs is the formula of the Gate

Revues before the war, in a more hare-brained version; but they have underestimated the amount of talent needed to turn out an evening of this kind. A sketch consisting of one line and a blackout must contain a funny line. The songs must have good music to them. The sketches must have a target and must hit it. Sometimes I felt the lack of sophistication revealed by the eighteen contributors to *Out of My Mind* would set even a *Salad Days* audience shuffling its feet. The brutal fact is that a remark funny enough to set the table on a roar at Jules Bar isn't necessarily funny enough to provoke laughter in an audience of five hundred paying customers.

Well, everyone concerned is young, and the cast are eager and pleasant, and when they put on their next show—as I hope they will—I beg them to ask some of their friends to tell them about some revues called *Cranks* and *Beyond the Fringe*, which have made the lot of the revuewright so much harder than it used to be.

There is this new school of play-writing with us now, where it is thought enough to invent a run of characters, dump them on the stage and keep them talking for a couple of hours. This is the school to which Mr. Henry Livings belongs.

Big Soft Nellie takes place, if that is not an overstatement, in the workroom behind Mr. Marris's wireless and television shop. Although Mr. Marris often commends his big soft mechanic Stanley for his industry, there is no sign that any work is ever done there. The nearest we ever get to it is Mr. Marris's petulant cry of "Banging the table won't do! Screw something up!" But Benny, the boy, practises judo and imitates cowboys; and Stanley's mother brings him pasties and calls in the police; and Mr. Twigg neglects the customers in the shop to chi-ike Geraldine, the nubile cashier; and Stanley tells pointless stories and nicks the enormous cabinet of Mr. Marris's television set, which his mother immediately returns. There is talk of an amateur concert, and the play ends, if that is the word, with Stanley reciting part of a poem called "The Sacred Nit," accompanied by Mr. Marris on the cash-register.



BRYAN PRINGLE as Stanley Castleton in *Big Soft Nellie*

What I cannot descry is Mr. Livings's target. He has created an amusing batch of people and given them some good lines and enough dotty fun to last an ambitious Punch-and-Judy company half an hour. The acting, especially of Griffith Davies as Benny, Roy Kinnear as Mr. Marris, and Bryan Pringle as the eponymous nellie (this is an epithet, not a diminutive of Stanley), is a long way more than merely adequate. But as Wells's Mr. Smallways used to say, what's it all blooming well for? Does it exist on two levels or is it simply a Littlewoodised version of Ben Travers? If the former, then the symbols escaped me; if the latter, it has not wit enough to keep it sweet.

— B. A. YOUNG

AT THE PICTURES

The Day the Earth Caught Fire

The Innocents

Too Late Blues

THERE are many signs in the course of *The Day the Earth Caught Fire* (Director: Val Guest) that one of its aims is to stimulate thought and discussion; the story leads up to a final scene that fades out on a note of uncertainty designed to send people away arguing; and then the title goes and gives the whole show away. So the earth *did* catch fire, did it?

All the same, the stimulus to thought is there, and the film deserves credit for that—though it can (and no doubt will by many) be taken quite superficially as a bit of science fiction offering an unusual number of laughs and the interest of seeing, for once, the inside of a real newspaper office. The story is told from the point of view of a reporter, Stenning (Edward Judd), on the *Daily Express*, of which a real ex-editor, Arthur Christiansen, appears as the editor. This is certainly one reason for an opinion in some quarters that there has never before been so convincing a picture of the production of a British newspaper and the way British newspapermen behave. And admittedly, it is convincing—up to a point, which brings us to another reason for that opinion. This is that the film shows, very plainly indeed, to what a pitch many British newspapermen have (or like to think they have) brought their imitation of the cynical fast-talking American reporters first shown to us long ago in the earliest sound films. Almost nobody on this fictional *Daily Express* speaks without making some kind of wisecrack, the man spoken to pauses not a second before replying with a wisecrack of his own, and this often seems to go on for minutes, all on one strong, loud, unvarying note, with never an interval for breath, let alone thought. The impression given is of over-rehearsal: it is as if the speakers were deliberately performing



EDWARD JUDD as Peter Stenning, JANET MUNRO as Jeannie, ARTHUR CHRISTIANSEN as the Editor and LEO MCKERN as Bill Maguire in *The Day the Earth Caught Fire*

a trick, keeping up backchat like a rally in table-tennis. It's quite entertaining, but after a time it gets a little monotonous, and it kills the flavour of reality which would be of such value in putting over a story meant to bring home to us the appalling possibilities of nuclear energy irresponsibly used.

Briefly: because an American nuclear bomb happens to have been exploded at the South Pole simultaneously with a Russian one at the North Pole, the earth's axis has been tilted and its orbit changed, and it is making at speed for the sun. Increasing super-tropical heat, unprecedented drought, water-rationing, disease, and the prospect of incineration in about four months—the only (doubtful) hope being world-wide co-operation to correct the orbit by four more planned explosions. Fadeout on the newspaper's machine-room, all ready to tell the world whether or not the cure has worked. The moral is clear: if world-wide co-operation had begun earlier, there would have been nothing to worry about.

The details of the strange things that happen in a gradually frying London are ingeniously and imaginatively shown, and the paper's pawky science correspondent (Leo McKern) is on hand to explain them; the whole thing is entertaining and—up to a point, as I say—convincing. But that point is important. If the people were more believable as

characters, the circumstances might be genuinely frightening, and the moral might sink in.

I was expecting *The Innocents* (Director: Jack Clayton) to be a great success. A good director, a sensitive star, a classic original (Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw*) which I knew had been conscientiously and intelligently adapted—there were so many good signs. And for some writers, evidently, the film does succeed: they feel the mounting horror of the story as Miss Giddens the governess (Deborah Kerr) gradually comes to realise that the two apparently angelic children in her care are possessed by the evil spirits of two dead people. Why did I find myself unmoved, watching in utter detachment?

I think the main trouble is one not unfamiliar when a literary work is filmed: the difference between literary time and film time. A paragraph of narrative can mysteriously give a reader the feeling that hours or days have gone by between the first line and the last, but a film must take incalculably longer to convey the same change in atmosphere. And with a story like this, which demands such gradual development, when the power of successive minor climaxes depends on such seemingly long preparation, the only alternatives for a film version are wearisome slowness or unjustified haste. Miss Kerr



"You must admit, a strict diet, abstention from alcohol and early to bed certainly keeps you fit."

is as good as anyone could be, but she is called on sometimes to react too quickly to some change of mood that there has been no time to establish, sometimes to delay her reaction improbably long until a necessary change of mood has been conveyed. Because of this, we—at any rate, I—though understanding her feeling of horror, fail to share it. It's a worthy, interesting, well-done picture, but I think it tries to do the impossible.

I don't know the history of *Too Late Blues* (Director: John Cassavetes), but could it be that it was financed by somebody who had to approve the story first? Because the theme is a surprisingly commercial one for the maker of *Shadows*: from beginning to contrived, radiant end, this story of a young jazz pianist and his "combo" and his girl is in essentials one that might have made an ordinary Hollywood musical any time in the last thirty years, and its emptiness, its conventional shape and its shallow characters inevitably limit what can be done with it. All the same the film is worth seeing: the scenes and characters may be in outline familiar, but the broken, realistic style gives them an unusual freshness and bite. Stella Stevens is charming as the girl, and Everett Chambers as a jealous agent is uncomfortably memorable.

What I hope for is another film made by Mr. Cassavetes exactly as he wants to make it, from choice of theme onwards. For all I know he may have had a free hand here; but on the evidence of *Shadows* it seems unlikely.

— RICHARD MALLETT

ON THE AIR

Party Political

A COLLEAGUE in the TV reviewing business, the excellent Peter Black of the *Daily Mail*, concluded a recent article with these words: "I intended to refer to Iain Macleod's broadcast for the Conservatives, *Relevant and Decisive*, but I cannot remember what it was about." Well, in spite of the fact that I made copious notes during the programme, I am almost equally handicapped, yet I feel impelled to natter for a column about party political broadcasts in general.

Party political broadcasts are like television commercials, acceptable and even exciting when one is directly interested in the commodity advertised, tedious and unpalatable when one is not. I can summon up a certain interest in ads. devoted to goods that I might conceivably want to spend money on, but the rest are anathema. Similarly I can take party political broadcasts only when I have a vote to spend, that is just before an election. Then they become good commercials: at all other times they are bad commercials. It is curious how this sense of inferiority and unworthiness communicates itself to the performers in off-peak political broadcasts. For all their brave clichés they sound as they look, vaguely embarrassed at being caught selling something suspect, adulterated and not at the required weight. And ashamed too, as they should be, at the transparently gimmicky structure of their programmes.

This applies of course to all parties. It applied particularly to Mr. Macleod's *Relevant and Decisive* programme, for at a moment when the Conservatives have much explaining to do about economic planning, immigration, wages, housing and defence their chairman (advised no doubt by the best admiss brains) contented himself with trivialities. Extracts from my screen-side notes:

"Initial film shots suggestive of American thriller. Bustle and excitement of Conservative Central Office. Pretty secretaries on stairs. Camera moves in earnestly in slow sinister probe. Corridors, more corridors. Door approaches stealthily, door opens without apparent human agency. Close-up of the body. It is smiling. It is Iain Macleod.

"Flash-back to Tory Party Conference at Brighton, Macleod speaking. Says Tories will win next election. (They will, too.) Says Tory party organisation will be better than ever. Makes compact with audience. If it will trust him and work for the party he will guarantee to stand firm, etc, etc. Tories not the party of privilege and reaction. Some Tories, says chairman, have original ideas about not birching, not flogging. Some even not in favour of extension of capital punishment. Film of speakers at conference—all talking about crime and its deserts. End of Conference interlude.

"Back to Macleod. Major problems to be discussed in new session of Parliament. Immigration a ticklish subject. Some control necessary. Defence: duty of Tory Government to defend the country. Forward, hand in hand, etc. Finis."

I can understand the Conservatives harking back to Brighton. After all it was an unusually bright and stimulating conference. But why restrict the playback to purely negative matters about corporal and capital punishment? And why parade poor Macleod, surely one of the bright hopes of the party, in such a well of nothingness?

If, as I believe, and *faute de mieux*, we are to have yet another decade of Tory rule, wouldn't it be kinder to the electorate to eliminate broadcasts that remind them of its plight? A moratorium on all party political broadcasts would help to make the whole sorry political shambles more acceptable.

I don't think I shall manage to sit through all six parts of the BBC's new serial *A Chance of Thunder*. So far the author's and the director's determination to keep the viewer in the dark has succeeded wonderfully well, but somehow the penumbral uncertainty seems to have communicated itself also to the cast, starring Clifford Evans, John Meillon and Peter Vaughan, with unhappy results. No one appears to have a glimmer of an idea about what's going on and every part is played with a nervous ambiguity that defies credibility. All will at length be revealed, but it will be too late for me.

— BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

Booking Office



THE VALUE OF ART

By MARIO AMAYA

The Economics of Taste. Gerald Reitlinger. *Barrie and Rockliff*, 42/-

Art on the Market. Maurice Rheims, translated by David Pryce-Jones. *Weidenfeld and Nicolson*, 36/-

THE one clear fact that emerges from these two complementary books on the history of the art market is that, despite all the talk about the modern art boom, prices are no higher to-day than they were in the Victorian era.

When we read a brief account of yet another sale record being smashed at Sotheby's or Christie's, we are apt to forget that even though the sum is higher in figures, in actual fact it isn't costing us any more than it did our forefathers. Modern inflation, fluidity of capital and to-day's laws, which allow art to be converted into tax deductions, must all be taken into account. In other words the price paid for a Picasso is equal in value to what was once paid for a Landseer.

In his intriguing book, Gerald Reitlinger gives a consistent and accurate history of the art market during the past two hundred years in England and, latterly, in America. Discussing supply, demand and the unpredictable factor of taste, he provides the opportunity for making some startling parallels between our own art-buying craze and that of the Georgians, Victorians and Edwardians. The second half of the book, and perhaps the most interesting, is devoted to price histories of the world's famous artists. It tells us that Constable's *Weymouth Bay* was bought in for £4 upon the artist's death; that to understand Picasso's prices we must divide by six and then compare them to Rosa Bonheur; and that while Monet's work used to rank in popularity with Manet and Renoir, it now is a poor fourth under Degas. Unfortunately the market is so mercurial that a few of the prices are already out of date: for instance a few months ago a Holman Hunt was sold for £9,500, or over four times the last entry in Mr. Reitlinger's

list when it was auctioned in 1957. In order to translate prices into modern currency values, a table of conversion for each era is worked out in terms of the cost of living and luxuries for the picture-buying class. Thus Mr. Reitlinger can assert that Millet's *La Bergère*, bought in the spendthrift '90s for £48,000, was, in fact, a more expensive purchase than Cézanne's *Boy in a Red Waistcoat*, which fetched an all-time high of £220,000 in 1958.

On the other hand, in Maurice Rheims's chatty account of the art market, "from Midas to Paul Getty" (neither of whom appears in his index), we are reminded that a work of art is only worth what somebody will pay for it and that often the wildest prices have been earned by works that posterity eventually thought less of, while masterpieces slipped by unnoticed. In this amusing book M. Rheims analyses with schoolboy psychology the more bizarre aspects of the art-world mentality. But funny as his anecdotes are, they obscure the hard reality that the art

business is one of the toughest in existence. A patchwork of gossip, making no concession to either time or subject, relates how Queen Christina was driven to theft to obtain the pictures she wanted; how Catherine the Great lied and cheated to collect; how Mme. de Sevigné was advised that paintings were so many "bars of gold"; how the patriots of the revolution ruthlessly sold the treasures of Versailles for a song; how Picasso's dealer, Paul Rosenberg, made a fortune "by mistake"; and how Cellini's famous salt-cellar belonging to Charles IX was miraculously saved from being melted down for its weight in gold. Cleverly illustrated with *bibels* and *objets d'art*, M. Rheims's book is definitely for the viewer on the touchline of art, while Mr. Reitlinger's important work should be of enormous help to the players on the pitch.

NEW NOVELS

Bethnal Green. Michael Fisher. *Cassell*, 16/-

The Forgotten Smile. Margaret Kennedy. *Macmillan*, 18/-

The Hard Life. Flann O'Brien. *MacGibbon and Kee*, 15/-

Doctor on Toast. Richard Gordon. *Michael Joseph*, 13/6

WE have grown accustomed in fiction to seeing slum-life in terms of teds and other exhibitionists. *Bethnal Green*, by Michael Fisher, is a refreshing change. Written in the first person, by the son of a docker, it conveys with great understanding the feelings of a boy torn between his unspoken loyalty to his family and his yearning to escape from his surroundings into independence. His parents are proud and decent, the bosses of a rough but friendly household. The boy has worked his way through grammar school and is all set for an engineering apprenticeship for which he is not ready; though despising teds, he gets mixed up with some small gangsters in a raid on a store which will earn him enough money to break free. He gets entangled with a girl as well. This novel is an account of the lessons he learns in adversity; when everything goes wrong his toughness thaws and he learns to accept responsibility and to love. It is also the best description I have read of family life jammed in a small slum house. Mr. Fisher is a born writer. He has humour and perception about character and considerable narrative power, and his laconic style lends itself to dramatic understatement.

Margaret Kennedy's new novel, *The Forgotten Smile*, is a smoothly professional job. It is about a Kensington mother who, bored with her tedious family, goes to live with crank friends, a brother and sister, on a remote Greek



island where they foster the cults of the ancients and resolutely keep progress at bay. When her hosts die, the island passes to a desiccated professor, who arrives to see about his legacy with a disgruntled artist in tow. The professor is horrified by the habits of the island, and the artist, who has had an unhappy life, is galvanised by them into a fresh start. The characters are interesting and amusing, and even if one doesn't quite believe in them this is a moderately entertaining novel.

For *At - Swim - Two - Birds* Flann O'Brien was hailed on all sides as an experimental Irish writer of promise. *The Hard Life* is my first meeting with him, and certainly it is rich and original stuff. Written in the first person by a small boy being brought up by a crazy uncle in Dublin of the '90s, it looks out with splendid bewilderment on the baffling world of grown-ups. Mr. O'Brien's dialogue is a joy, and the arguments between Mr. Collopy, the uncle, and his old debating friend Father Fahrt over a crock of whisky are memorable, and so is their pilgrimage to Rome with the writer's cheapjack brother. Mr. O'Brien is a Gaelic scholar, and this releases him from inhibitions about the English language, which he forces into all kinds of gorgeous shapes. This little book is wild and very funny.

"I hadn't expected to hear any more of Sir Lancelot's case for a bit, knowing how the wheels of the law make the works in a grandfather clock look like an

Aston-Martin gearbox..." In *Doctor on Toast* Richard Gordon has not lost his gift of phrase, which carries the reader on agreeably from one farcical situation to another. His hero, who is supposed to be writing the biography of one of the grand old men of Harley Street, goes as a ship's doctor to be near the girl he loves, only to find her fiancé already installed as his personal steward. The permutations of a light plot can safely be left to Mr. Gordon, to whom we all owe a great debt for removing the lid from the stickier absurdities of medical etiquette.

—ERIC KEOWN

SOVEREIGNS FOR PICKING UP.

The Golden Wreck. Alexander McKee. *Souvenir Press, 21/-.*

Here is one more in the long line of noble stories of great storms at sea. In October 1859 a huge hurricane swept over Great Britain leaving along the coasts hundreds of broken vessels, among them the luxury liner of her period—Melbourne to Liverpool in sixty days—the *Royal Charter*, clipper sailing ship fitted with a pitifully small auxiliary steam engine. Driven on to the north coast of Anglesey she was broken in two and pounded to pieces with the loss of nearly 500 men, women and children dashed to pieces on the rocks. Few of them were drowned. The disaster was the more dramatic because the *Royal Charter* was carrying gold in bulk and many of the passengers had gold about them. All this was spilled on the shore

where even today it may be possible to find a chance sovereign or a small gold bar.

Mr. McKee has not only collected the evidence but has made an underwater examination of the brutal rock face against which the vessel was thrown. His story is explicit, convincing and immensely full of the storm.

—C. CONWAY PLUMBE

IBERIAN PASSIONS

Love and the Spanish. Nina Epton. *Cassell, 25/-*

One might have expected that when Miss Epton considered love in the land of Don Juan, she would have an attractive report to present; and in the third of her surveys of amorous Europe, she does not disappoint us. Spain, it appears, is a land where the statues of the Virgin and St. John the Baptist cannot be left alone together, even in a cathedral, with any propriety, and have to be accorded a military guard. Spain is a land of extreme restraint and ferocious passion ("their love," wrote Mme. d'Aulnoy, "is a furious kind of love"). Spain is also the land of outspoken eloquence: who indeed would hear, at Paddington, the farewell that Miss Epton overheard on the platform at Seville: "Goodbye for now, angel from the waist up, devil from the waist down!"? Miss Epton has read widely, she has questioned dozens of Spaniards, she has even made them fill in a questionnaire. Her book is varied, instructive and entertaining.

—JOANNA RICHARDSON

Searle's-eye View

2—COLIN WILSON,
as the imagination sees him,
and as the camera does



VIRTUOSO

The Self-made Villain. David Lampe and Laszlo Szenasi. *Cassell*, 21/-

Trebitsch-Lincoln was a con-man of great talent. Less malignant than Corvo and lacking Aleister Crowley's way with devils, he belongs with them among the autobiographical fantasists, the men who not only lead preposterous lives but draw other men into them. He convinced tough politicians and industrialists and newspaper editors that it would be profitable or patriotic to keep him and, from time to time, his family in luxury. His career is straightforwardly and readably recounted in this biography, which tries for precision in a world of shadows. No story based on human credulity is incredible; this one comes near to it.

A Hungarian Jew, he helped Seeborn Rowntree with social research, sat as Liberal Member for Darlington, spied simultaneously for Britain and Germany in World War I, speculated in Polish and Rumanian oil, helped organise the Kapp putsch in Germany, advised a Chinese War Lord on strategy and ended as a Buddhist Abbot. His career was full of escapes from prison, periods of acute poverty, outbursts of high living and, the most extraordinary part of it, constant loans, large ones, frequently from people who had already been tricked by him. — R. G. G. PRICE

THE FUTURE IN ALGERIA

The Algerian Problem. Edward Behr. *Hodder and Stoughton*, 21/-

Mr. Behr has served for a number of years in Algeria as correspondent for *Reuter's* and *Time* and he writes of affairs there with an authority that probably no other English-speaking writer can rival. . . . It is a very fully-documented, a very fair and very terrifying book that he has given us. The record of beastliness and bad faith on both sides is almost beyond belief and to read the story makes one almost physically sick. The question is what can come out of it. What was obviously desirable was a free, mixed society, where the Algerians had their political rights and where they allowed the French to live on among them under tolerable conditions and to contribute the know-how which is essential for the country's prosperity. There is still a chance of such a society in Morocco and in Tunis to the two sides of Algeria. After what has happened any life of partnership in Algeria seems hardly conceivable. Mr. Behr does not think that the present Algerian nationalists are communists. The danger is rather that Algerians are being trained as technicians to-day behind the Iron Curtain and there are no other Algerian technicians than they. When the French move out, these technicians will then move in, bringing with them of course not only their technical skill but also their political faith. — CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS



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BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

"E. H. S."

Drawn From Life. Ernest H. Shepard. *Methuen*, 25/-

A gentle and ingenuous tale of an ordinary chap's schooldays and early manhood at the turn of the century, closing with his courtship and marriage in 1904. Ernest Shepard has come a long way since he "won his first shilling at the age of seven, and contemplated marriage on the strength of it," but he has been very content with the direction in which his lot has been cast, and lost

neither his sense of proportion nor his love of simple, kindly things.

The most refreshing aspect of this leisurely and graceful account is its freedom from the heart searching and tortured muck-raking of emotional messes that seem commonplace to-day. When the book closes Shepard was just another struggling artist living on 21s. a week. In these fresh recollections, he has produced a delightful companion piece to his earlier *Drawn from Memory*.

— JOHN DURRANT

BLOOD COUNT

Requiem for a Schoolgirl. Ivan T. Ross. *Heinemann*, 15/- . American teacher tracks cause of suicide of teenage pupil through ramifications of juvenile vice-ring, convincingly out of his depth most of the time (except that he's a bit too successful with his humane teaching). Not as absorbing as Ross's last, *Murder Out of School*, but very intelligent.

The Man Who Ran Away. Daniel B. Dodson. *Arthur Barker*, 16/- . Jaded American helping Trujillo-type Caribbean dictatorship with its aviation is engulfed in its power-politics. Flying, secret police, dictator and his entourage all done with fierce efficiency, sometimes comic. A lot of sex and one great dollop of torture. A bit unbalanced but enthralling.

The Pale Horse. Agatha Christie. *Crime Club Choice*, 15/- . Cosy English version of *Murder Inc.* eliminates unwanted relatives for a fee (payment most ingeniously arranged). Is it black, black, blacker than black magic? Young expert in mogul architecture investigates. No fireworks, but more fun than some recent Christies. (The standards one demands of the experts!)

The Nose on My Face. Laurence Payne. *Hodder and Stoughton*, 16/- . Laconic detective rummages through Chelsea and up and down the Thames after murderous drug-ring. Story crackles erratically along, with nicely grotesque bit-parts and some flashing moments. Not much depth, perhaps, but fun.

The Pit in the Garden. Laurence Meynell. *Collins*, 12/6. Hero, something

shady in his past, leaves job with pools promoters to odd-job for recent big winner, little middle-aged spinster. They become very friendly, but her companion is a bit of a sex-machine. One of the three must go—there lies the suspense—which? Rounded, compassionate and effective.

Highway to Fear. Donald Moore. *Hodder and Stoughton*, 15/- . Layman in Singapore, about to drive to London for fun, picks up British Secret Agent (?), then beautiful ex-communist ditto, latter with earth-shaking secret on microfilm. Whole oriental communist machine is after them. All utterly ludicrous, but buckets along from thrill to thrill and British agent is splendidly Bulldog-Drummondish.

Maigret Afraid. Simenon. *Hamish Hamilton*, 12/6. Series of apparently maniac killings in provincial town. Chief suspect member of grand but impoverished family who have married money. Family stiflingly well done. Maigret, there by accident, elucidates unusually tricky plot. (Poirot would have been at home in it.)

High Corniche. David Dodge. *Michael Joseph*, 15/- . Rich, tough engineer, resting at Cannes, discovers his unknown daughter by ex-wife who left him eighteen years back. Wife uses daughter as lever to make him help present husband (hiding from murder rap) out of Spain. Opposition: daughter's fiancé, powerful hidalgo, who wants to use family influence to rescue husband and thus bind daughter to him. Sounds complex but is convincing. Well written, leisurely, but not slack. — PETER DICKINSON



Another Man's Poison

SMALL, stealthy, leaden-shoed footsteps inform the early Sunday calm.

"Oh dear! They're up!" I think to myself sleepily. "What now?"

Our bedroom door opens slowly and John peers round it, his head just reaching to the handle.

"Sshh!" he hisses.

I wait, silent, eyebrows raised.

"You're not to go getting up," he whispers sibilantly. "You're both to stay in bed. Promise?"

I nod.

"No. You must say it properly."

"We promise to stay in bed," I repeat. Already, alas, I can hear the kettle being filled.

"As it happens," I suggest, "I don't think I want tea this morning; I'd much rather have some nice cold water. How about you, darling?" I nudge my mate, who groans, and I go on cheerfully "Daddy wants cold water too. And it's rather warm to bother with toast, isn't it? Let's have plain bread, shall we?"

"Just you wait and see!" He backs out and firmly shuts us in.

An hour and a half later, during which time the smells and sounds from below have kept me wide awake, hand to heart, we hear them approaching. We are, by now, both sitting up in bed, tensely expectant.

We hear John mutter impatiently "Oh, do get on, James!"

"You shut up, you; just open the door for me."

Our door opens to disclose James (whose head just tops the handle)

with his arms fully extended, bearing a laden tray.

George swings a leg out of bed.

"I say, chaps, that's fearfully decent of you both! Here, let me give you a hand."

"Oh, no, you don't!" they both glower at him. James falters towards us, one foot carefully feeling the way for the other.

We all sigh relievedly when the tray rests safely on our knees. It presents a gay, unusual appearance, embellished by a highly original flower-arrangement composed of my only, precious cactus bloom fringed jovially with sorrel and chickweed.

"I picked those," announces John proudly. "Like them?"

"Rather! They're lovely."

James, very consciously the senior partner in the business, eyes them

coolly, murmuring "Umhum, they're all right. Of course, I was too busy with the cooking to mess about with flowers and all that."

"Yes, of course you were, darling. And very interesting it all looks, too," I say, running an eye over the tray-load. There are two cups of coolish water afloat with brown blobs; two bowls of a thick, grey-brown paste; a baking tin of what looks like glue and a plate heavy with—well, sandwiches, I suppose.

Avoiding my eye, George rubs his hands together gleefully and my respect for him grows. "Now then, my dear fellows, this all looks very excellent. What's on the menu?"

They burst out together, with sparkling eyes, lovingly itemising what we realise must be their ideal breakfast.

"That's porridge, made with cocoa, see? Those are toasted marshmallows, bit like toffee by now, scrumptious! Those are *mixture* sandwiches, simply everything together! And that's coffee—for a treat!"

"Oooh!" we feign enthusiasm. Then George adds hopefully, "But won't you both join us?"

"No, it's for *you*, it's all for you, it's *your* treat," they beam.

Under their watchful eyes we loyally eat and drink, registering pleasure and appreciation. Elated, they whoop off and we lie back gently on our pillows, unable to move for some time to come.

Some time later, after swallowing an Alka-seltzer, I creep down to survey the kitchen. On the sticky, littered table lies a note scrawled in childish capitals: "SORI MUDDIL LUV."

—HILARY HAYWOOD

The George in My Life

THE first george lived on my bedroom ceiling twenty years ago. There has been at least one in my life ever since, and during a long and amiable association I have come to refer to them generally as georges. *Isopeda immanis* is so formal.

Georges are about five inches across, flat and hairy. They strike terror into the heart of a New Australian, especially when they come into the house on wet nights, sliding between window and

frame to hunt insects on the walls and ceilings.

However, georges are harmless to those of us with less than six legs. In my house the fat black ones are left in their corners in peace. I have neither the heart nor the stomach to squash them or suck them sickeningly into the vacuum cleaner, merely clearing away their dusty webs now and then while they wait gratefully in cracks like old ladies at the launderette.

My Viennese husband, however, still has peculiar Old World ideas about the venomous propensities of the smaller forms of wild life to be found, if one *must* look, in the Antipodes. His courage is the kind that will wave a red rag at a bank manager but anything that crawls, slithers or scuttles turns him into a quivering coward. He can be found in hysterics if a spider as big as a pinhead sizes him up from a distance of six feet. During certain months he will not set foot in the garden after dark in case he should run face first into one of the huge webs that *Arania producta* so carefully throws across the garden path. My descriptions of how the clever thing builds her snare, and how pretty and harmless she is are met with cold incredulity.

When the occasional george is observed on our bedroom ceiling poised directly over his pillow, it is useless for me to say that georges never drop from bedroom ceilings, and that they are obviously unaware of anything as indigestible, spiderwise, as a large man in striped pyjamas. In the interests of marital happiness I must leave my bed, fetch a broom and painstakingly direct those eight hairy legs out of the target area.

First a gentle prod at the rear offside, then a touch on the left mandible, always remembering that georges are inclined to panic and run sideways like crabs, and across the ceiling we go in a series of oblique rushes, ending up in the

wrong corner. Ease him along the crack, back to the ventilator. "No, no," my husband's voice moans thickly through the blankets. "Not the ventilator—he'll come in again." To the window, then, slowly, and at this probable point of no return my husband pokes his head out to give more lucid instructions and clearer encouragement. I guide my friend behind the curtain, open the window, and whoosh! another george bites the garden soil.

In fairness I must admit that spiders have their place. Even I dislike the patter of little furry feet up my calf in the dark while driving across Sydney Harbour Bridge in a storm at peak hours. There I am one night, full of conscious virtue, fetching my husband home from the city. Suddenly, gallantly, he flicks something off his knee in my direction, shouting "There's a george in the car!" and huddles in his corner waiting for deliverance.

"Keep quite calm," I snap, regaining the carriageway after a digression with one wheel along the centre strip. "The george is harmless to man, being predatory only upon those less fortunate species of the class insecta which cannot elude its swift forays upon their habitat..."

"I tell you there's a george—do something—stop the car!"

I ask you. With six lanes of traffic snaking alongside, a mile of cars stretching bumper to bumper behind me, horns volleying, exhausts thundering, and a loaded double-decker bus nudging me in the rear?

Can I stage a breakdown? If so, can I find the george before the breakdown van comes? What of the patrolling police, usually so kind to women drivers? Phillip Street Police Station would be the inevitable destination of one found searching her car for a george with a torch on a wet night in the middle of the Harbour Bridge. No, not that! Bravely I cling to the wheel, shaking now my right foot and now my left, thus proceeding in shuddering fits and starts of acceleration and feeling each of those eight hairy feet in turn on one leg then the other. The bus gets out from behind and glares past us.

Somehow we shake our way across the Bridge and pull up in the first kerbside parking space. My husband dives for the torch. "There it is!" he cries, flinching. There it is, bathed in light on the steering wheel. An absolute midget of a spider with jaws that wouldn't meet through tissue paper. Chubby, innocent, non-hairy. Non-george. "But it might be when it grows up!" my husband says indignantly.

—SERAPHINA BELL

Speech Day Thoughts

THE female young, though strong and active,
Falls very short of being attractive.
Its voice is loud, its clothing tasteless,
Its manners rough, its figure waistless;
It strains its hair in ghastly knots,
Its face is over-run by spots;
It weighs ten stone if it's an ounce
And does not so much walk as bounce;
And yet in manner subtly strange
These graceless creatures swiftly change
—It might be almost overnight—
To things of beauty and delight,
While wondering parents humbly praise
The miracle of Nature's ways.

—EDITH SIMPSON



"Confound it, Sarah, you used to call me that!"

FIRST APPEARANCE

GOING TO PRESS

IT was attached to the yard fence. You dumped a sheep on it; the weight tripped a trigger, and there was your sheep, clamped. I think it was known as a press.

My job was to catch the sheep. And apart from the time I spent lying in the Queensland dust while the flock walked over my face, I was quite sharp at it.

It was about the four hundred and fiftieth that did for me. I had wrestled it as far as the press and then, summoning all my strength, had heaved the animal up and forward. The weight was too much for my extended arms and I fell against the back of the press at the exact moment that I dropped the sheep on top of it. The press snapped shut, gripping the sheep and a fold of my stomach at one and the same time. We lay together, kicking feebly.

"Get going, boy!" shouted the station owner.

"I can't," I moaned. "My stomach's caught in the press."

A look of utter disbelief came on his face.

"Don't just stand there," I yelled. "Let me out!"

"It just ain't possible," he said. "Fifty years I've been in the outback and I ain't never heard of such a thing happening before. Never."

He turned away and whistled shrilly.

"Hey, Jack, c'mere!"

Jack was a good three hundred yards away. I groaned.

"Can't turn you loose before Jack sees you. Wouldn't be right." He shook his head sadly. "Gawd," he said, "Pommies!"

The expression of awed respect was still on his face when, very politely, he fired me two weeks later.

— R. G. R. MARSDEN

Contributions—from writers who have not appeared in *Punch* before, though Toby Competition winners are eligible—must not be longer than 300 words and must not have been published elsewhere. Address First Appearance, *Punch*, 10 Bouverie St., London, EC4.

JOSEPH AND THE DRAGON

DURING my early days in the entertainment world I was working with a well-known menagerie. We were in Yeovil for a week and I had managed to find some very good digs, where the landlady possessed a beautiful daughter named Zadie.

I was only twenty years old and I fell in love with Zadie. One day while sitting on the sofa I was getting romantic and about to steal a kiss, when, to my horror, the door opened and in walked Ma! She took one look at me, gave a roar, rushed into the kitchen and returned waving a copper stick. I made a hasty exit, Ma following me. Along the street I charged making for the only haven I knew, the menagerie. Undaunted, Ma followed me right into the show. I rushed up to the cage of the ferocious-looking African lions, opened the trainer's door, jumped inside, closed the door and stood facing the bars with the two lions behind me. Up to the cage came my pursuer and, fixing me with a frightening glare, bellowed "Come out, you coward."

— J. STANTON

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— ROBERT B. BENSON



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE XV

Gerald Gover (piano). Dec. 10, 3 pm, Joel Ryce, London Pianoforte Series. Dec. 11, 7.30 pm, Earl Wild (piano). Dec. 12, 7.30 pm, Ann Pashley (mezzo-soprano) Jack Irons (tenor) Robert Jones (piano). **Royal Opera House, Covent Garden**—Dec. 6 and 8, 7.30 pm, *The Silent Woman* (Strauss). Dec. 7 and 12, 7.30 pm, *Les Sylphides*, *Petrushka*, *Les Patineurs* (ballet). Dec. 9, 2.15 pm, 7.30 pm, *The Sleeping Beauty* (ballet). Dec. 11, 7.30 pm, *The Queen of Spades* (Tchaikovsky). **Sadler's Wells Theatre**—Dec. 6 and 8, 7.30 pm, *Il Trovatore* (Verdi). Dec. 7 and 9, 7.30 pm, *Die Fledermaus* (Strauss). **Savoy**—D'Oyly Carte Opera Season. *Trial by Jury* and *H.M.S. Pinafore*. Dec. 11-13, 7.30 pm.

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GALLERIES



Agnew—Victorian Painting. **Alfred Brod**—Christmas drawings and sketches. **Arts Council**—Larionov and Goncharov. **Brook Street**—Designs for Russian Ballet. **Gimpel Fils**—Contemporary Eskimo Art. **Grosvenor**—Kaplan lithographs. **Hanover**—Serge Rezvani. **Lefevre**—Jean Commère until Dec. 11. **Marlborough**—French landscapes. **Molton**—Robyn Denny until Dec. 9. **McRoberts and Tunnard**—John Tunnard. **Reid**—Watercolours and pastels, 19th-20th c. **Royal Academy**—Sir Thomas Lawrence. **Tate**—Epstein Memorial. **Tooth**—Recent acquisitions, 16 c. **Waddington**—Leon Zack. **Walker's**—Charles Vyse pottery. **Whitechapel**—Derek Hill. **Wildenstein**—British contemporary artists. **Zwemmer**—Mixed Christmas paintings.

MISCELLANEOUS



Parliament, Strangers Gallery, House of Commons. Monday to Thursday 4.15 pm, Fridays 11.30 am: House of Lords, Tuesday and Wednesday 2.30 pm, Thursday 3 pm.
Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, W.C.2. Public galleries open Monday to Friday 10.15 am to 4.30 pm.
Royal Exchange, E.C.3. Monday to Friday 10 am to 3 pm, Saturdays 10 am to 12 noon.
Royal Smithfield Show, Earls Court. Until Dec. 8.
Science Museum, Exhibition Road, S.W.7. National Museum of Science and Technology. Daily 10 am to 6 pm, Sundays 2.30 to 6 pm. Daily public lectures, children's films, 11 am. Sundays excepted.
Stock Exchange, 8 Throgmorton Street, E.C.2. Public gallery open Tuesday to Friday 10.30 am to 3 pm.
Tower of London, E.C.3. Monday to Saturday 10 am to 4 pm.
Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, S.W.7. Museum of Applied and Fine Arts, all countries, styles and periods. Daily 10 am to 6 pm, Sundays 2.30 pm to 6 pm.
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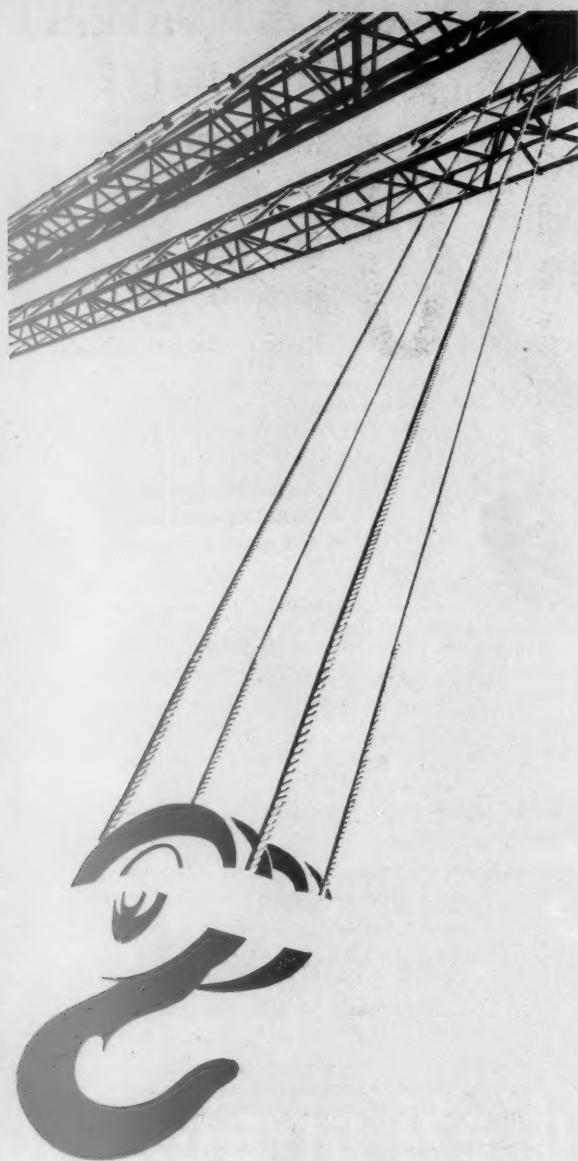
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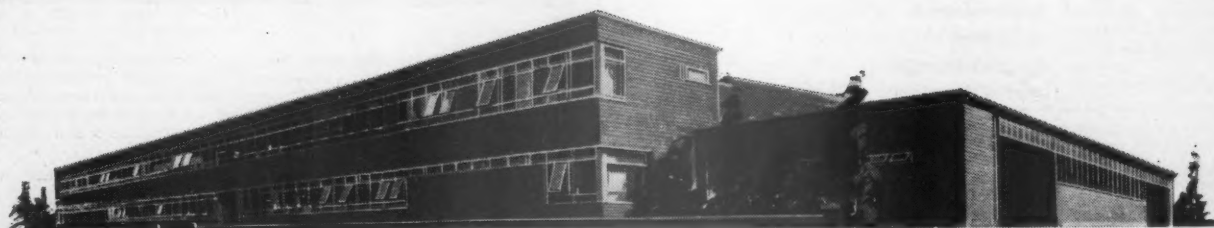
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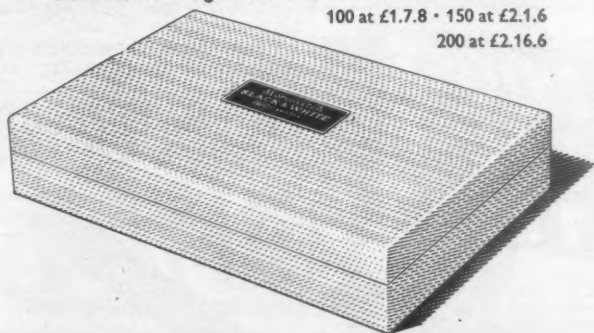
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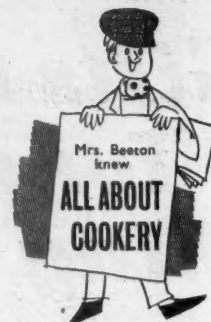
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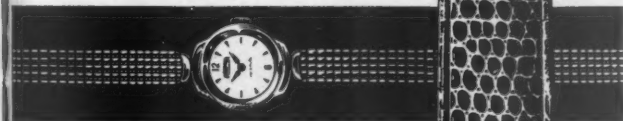
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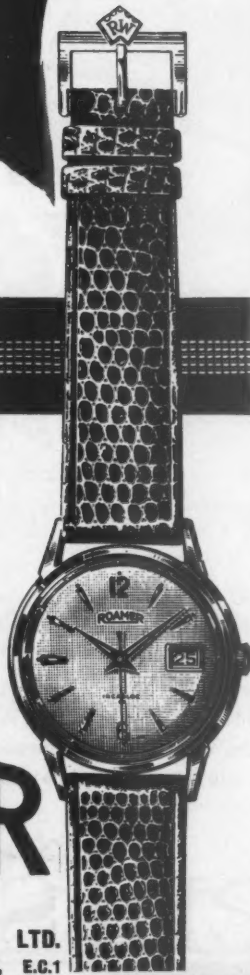
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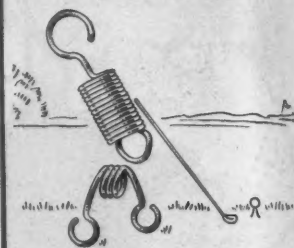
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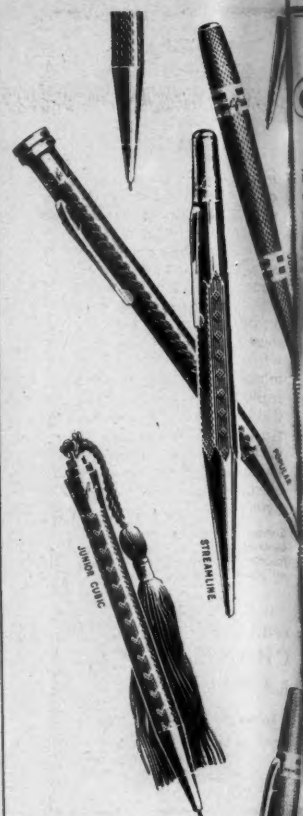
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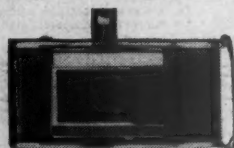
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